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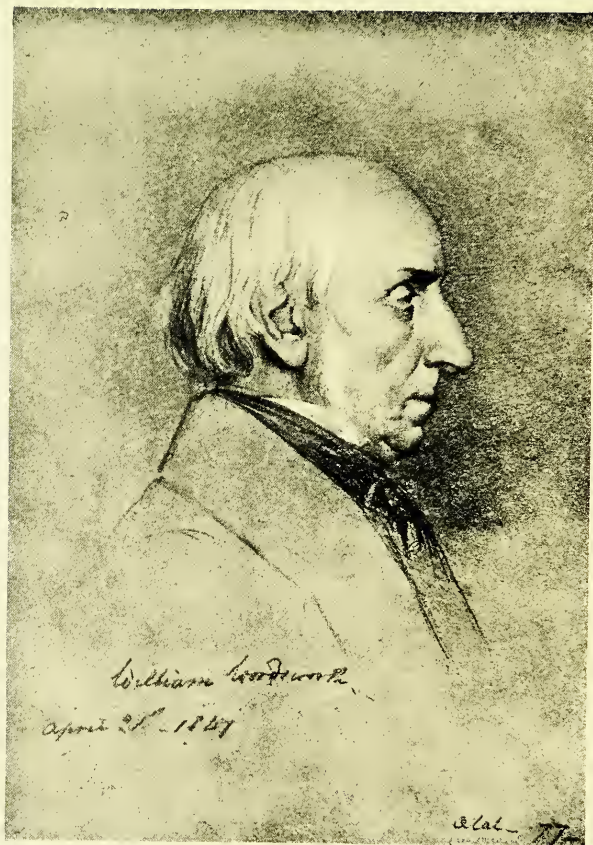
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WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, AETAT 77.

Lake Country Sketches

By the Rev.
H. D. Rawnsley

Honorary Canon of Carlisle

Author of
"Literary Associations of
the English Lakes."

Glasgow
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1903

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GLASGOW: PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
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TO A
TRUE LOVER OF NATURE
AND THE ENGLISH LAKES
EDITH MY WIFE

“ From Nature and her overflowing soul,
I had received so much, that all my thoughts
Were steeped in feeling ; I was only then
Contented, when with bliss ineffable
I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still ;
O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart ;
O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and sings,
Or beats the gladsome air ; o'er all that glides
Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not
If high the transport, great the joy I felt,
Communing in this sort through earth and heaven
With every form of creature, as it looked
Towards the Uncreated with a countenance
Of adoration, with an eye of love.”

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NOTE

The Publishers have to thank Professor Knight and Mr. David Douglas for permission to reproduce the first illustration ; Mr. Gordon Wordsworth for the second ; Mr. J. Henry Hogg, Kendal, for the third ; Mr. G. P. Abraham, Keswick, for the fourth and eighth ; Mr. Mayson, Keswick, for the fifth and seventh ; Mr. Rupert Potter for the sixth ; Mr. A. Pettitt, Keswick, for the ninth and tenth illustrations.

REMINISCENCES OF WORDSWORTH AMONG THE PEASANTRY OF WESTMORELAND.

HAVING grown up in the neighbourhood of Alfred Tennyson's old home in Lincolnshire, I had been struck with the swiftness with which,

As year by year the labourer tills
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades,

the memories of the poet of the Somersby Wold had faded 'from off the circle of the hills.' I had been astonished to note how little real interest was taken in him or his fame, and how seldom his works were met with in the houses of the rich or poor in the very neighbourhood.

It was natural that, coming to reside in the Lake country, I should endeavour to find out what of Wordsworth's memory among the

men of the Dales still lingered on,—how far he was still a moving presence among them,—how far his works had made their way into the cottages and farm-houses of the valleys.

But if a certain love of the humorous induced me to enter into or follow up conversations with the few still living among the peasants who were in the habit of seeing Wordsworth in the flesh, there was also a genuine wish to endeavour to find out how far the race of Westmoreland and Cumberland farm-folk—the ‘Matthews’ and the ‘Michaels’ of the poet as described by him—were real or fancy pictures, or how far the characters of the dalesmen had been altered in any remarkable manner by tourist influences during the thirty-two years that have passed since the aged poet was laid to rest.

For notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Ruskin, writing in 1876, had said ‘that the Border peasantry (painted with absolute fidelity by Scott and Wordsworth)’ are, as hitherto, a scarcely injured race,—that in his fields at Coniston he had men who might have fought with Henry V. at Agincourt without being distinguished from any of his knights,—that he could take his tradesmen’s

word for a thousand pounds, and need never latch his garden gate, nor fear molestation in wood or on moor, for his girl guests; the more one went about seeking for such good life and manners and simple piety as Wordsworth knew and described in fell-side homes, or such generous unselfishness and nobility among the Dale farmers as would seem to have been contemporaries of the poet, the more one was a little saddened to find a characteristic something faded away, and a certain beauty vanished that the simple retirement of old valley-days of fifty years ago gave to the men amongst whom Wordsworth lived. The strangers with their gifts of gold, their vulgarity, and their requirements, have much to answer for in the matter. But it is true that the decent exterior, the shrewd wit, and the manly independence and natural knightliness of the men of the soil is to a large extent responsible for raising expectations of nobility of life and morals, the expectation of which would be justified by no other peasant class in England, and which, by raising an unfair standard for comparison, ought to be prepared for some disappointment. All said and done they are Nature's gentlefolk still.

One's walks and talks with the few who remember Wordsworth, or *Wudsworth* as they always call him, have done little to find out more than the impression that they as outsiders formed of him, but it allowed one to grasp by the hand a few of those natural noblemen who by their presence still give testimony to a time and a race of men and women fast fading away, and in need already of the immortality of lofty tradition that Wordsworth has accorded them.

While these few of his still living peasant contemporaries show us the sort of atmosphere of severely simple life, hand-in-hand with a 'joy in wildest commonalty spread,' that made some of Wordsworth's poems possible, I think the facts that they seem to establish of Wordsworth's seclusion, and the distance he seems to have kept from them and their cottage homes, not a little interesting. For they point to the suggestion that the poet lived so separate and apart from them, so seldom entered the 'huts where poor men lie,' or mixed with the fell-side folk at their sports and junketings, that he was enabled, in his swift selection and appreciation of the good and pure and true in their surroundings, to forget, quite honestly perhaps,

the faults of the people among whom he lived.

Be that as it may, this paper aims at establishing no new doctrine or view about the man, but at simply putting on record reminiscences still in the minds of some of those who often saw him, knew his fancies and his ways (as only servants know the fancies and ways of their master), and spoke with him sixty, fifty, or forty years ago.¹

These reminiscences may seem worthless to many, just from the fact that they are the words of outsiders. They will seem to others of interest for that very reason. And this much must be said, they are trustworthy records from true mouths. The native love of *truth*, or perhaps better, the native *dislike ever to hazard suggestion*, or to speak *without book*, is guarantee for that. To ask questions in Westmoreland is the reverse of asking them of Syrian fellaheen and Egyptian dragomans. The Cumberland mind is not inventive, nor swift to anticipate the answer you wish, and one is always brought up sharp with—

‘Nay, I wadnt say that nayther’:

¹ This paper was written in 1881 and was read at the annual meeting of the Wordsworth Society in London in 1882—Robert Browning in the chair.

‘Nay, I’se not sartain aboot that’:

‘Might bea, but not to my knowledge howivver :

‘Its nea good my saaing I kna that, when I doant, noo than,’—and so on.

Twenty summers had let the ‘daisies blossom round Wordsworth’s grave, when, in 1870, I heard of and saw the old lady who had once been in service at Rydal Mount, and was now a lodging-house keeper at Grasmere. She shall be called as first witness, but what kind of practical and unimaginative mind she had may be gathered from the following anecdote. My sister came in from a late evening walk, and said, ‘O Mrs. D——, have you seen the wonderful sunset?’ The good lady turned sharply round, and drawing herself to her full height, as if mortally offended, answered, ‘No, Miss R——, I’m a tidy cook, I know, and, ‘they say,’ a decentish body for a landlady, and sic-like, but I nivver bodder nowt aboot sunsets or them sort of things, they’re nowt ataw i’ my line.’ Her reminiscence of Wordsworth was as worthy of tradition as it was explanatory, from her point of view, of the method in which Wordsworth composed, and

was helped in his labours by his enthusiastic sister.

‘Well you kna,’ were her words, ‘Mr. Wordsworth went bumming and booing about, and she, Miss Dorothy, kept close behind him, and she picked up the bits as he let ’em fall, and tak ’em down, and put ’em on paper for him. And you med,’ continued the good dame, “be very well sure as how she didn’t understand nor make sense out of ’em, and I doubt that he [Wordsworth] didn’t kna much aboot them either himself, but, howivver, there’s a gay lock o’ fowk as wad, I dar say.’

And here it will be well to put in a caution. The vernacular of the Lake district must be understood a little, or wrong impressions would be got of the people’s memory of the bard. ‘What was Mr. Wordsworth like in personal appearance?’ I once asked of an old retainer, who still lives not far from Rydal Mount. ‘He was a ugly-faäced man, and a meän liver,’ was the answer. And when he continued, ‘Ay, and he was a deäl aboot t’ roads, ye kna,’ one might have been pardoned if one had concluded that the Lake poet was a sort of wild man of the woods, an ugly customer of desperate life, or high-

wayman of vagrant habit. All that was really meant when translated was, that he was a man of marked features, and led a very simple life in matters of food and raiment.

The next witness I shall call to speak of the poet is none other than the lad whose wont it was to serve the Rydal Mount kitchen with meat, week in week out, in the poet's days. A grey-haired man himself now, his chief memory of Wordsworth is that of a tall man, 'rather a fineish man in build, with a bit of a stoop, and a deal of grey hair upon his heäd.'

In some of the days of close analysis that are coming upon us, poets will perhaps be found to have depended for the particular colour of their poems, or turns and cast of thought, upon the kind of food—vegetable or animal—that they mostly subsisted on. It will be well to chronicle the fact that Wordsworth had an antipathy to veal, but was very partial to legs—'lived on legs, you med amost say.' But as my friend added, almost in the same breath, that the poet was 'a greät walker i' t' daäles,' he had uttered unconsciously a double truth.

The next fact that remained clear and distinct in the butcher's mind was, that

whenever you met the poet he was sure to be 'quite [pronounced white] plainly dressed.' Sometimes in a round blue cloak; sometimes wearing a big wideawake, or a bit of an old boxer, but plainly dressed, almost 'poorly dressed, ya mun saay, at the best o' times.' 'But for aw that, he was quite an object man,' he added, meaning that there was a dignity that needed no dressing to set it off, I suppose, in the poet's mien and manner. It was interesting to hear, too, how different Wordsworth had seemed in his grave silent way of passing children without a word, from 'li'le Hartley Coleridge,' with his constant salutation, uncertain gait, his head on one side, his walking-stick suddenly shouldered, and then his frantic little rushes along the road, between the pauses of his thought. 'Many's the time,' said my friend, 'that me and my sister has run ourselves intil a lather to git clear fra Hartley, for we allays thowt, ya kna, when he started running he was efter us. But as fur Mister Wudsworth, he'd pass you, same as if yan was nobbut a stean. He niver cared for childer, however; yan may be certain of that, for didn't I have to pass him four times in t' week, up to the door wi' meat? And he niver oncst said

owt. Ye're well aware, if he'd been fond of children he 'ud 'a spoke.'

But Mrs. Wordsworth had made her impressions too on the youth's mind. 'As for Mrs. Wudsworth, she was plainer in her ways than he was. The plainest wooman in these parts,—for aw the warld the bettermer part of an auld farm-body.' He intended nothing disrespectful by this simile, he only wished to say she was simple in manner and dress. But if Mrs. Wordsworth's personal appearance had impressed him, her powers of housekeeping had impressed him more. She was very persevering, and 'terb'le particular in her accounts, never allowed you an inch in the butching-book.' It did not raise one's opinion of Lake country butcher morality to find this a grievance, but the man as he spoke seemed to think a little sorely of those old-fashioned days, when mistresses, not cooks, took supervision of the household economies.

I bade my friend good-day, and the last words I heard were, 'But Mr. Wudsworth *was quite an object man, mind ye.*'

It is an easy transition from butcher-boy to gardener's lad, and I will now detail a

conversation I had with one who, in this latter capacity at Rydal Mount, saw the poet daily for some years.

It was Easter Monday, and I knew that the one-time gardener's lad at Rydal Mount had grown into a vale-renowned keeper of a vale-renowned beer-house. I had doubts as to calling on this particular day, for Easter Monday and beer go much together in our Lake country. But I was half reassured by a friend who said, 'Well, he gets drunk three times a day, but tak's t' air atween whiles, and if you catch him airing he will be verra civil, but it's a bad day to find him sober, this.' I explained that I wanted to talk with him of old Wordsworthian days. 'Aw, it's Wudsworth you're a gaan to see about? If that's the game, you're reet enuff, for, drunk or sober, he can crack away a deal upon Mr. Wudsworth. An' i'se not so varry seuer but what he's best drunk a li'le bit.' I was reassured, and soon found myself sitting on the stone ale-bench outside the public-house, the best of friends with a man who had been apparently grossly libelled—for he was as sober as a judge—and whose eye fairly twinkled as he spoke of the Rydal garden days.

‘ You see, blessed barn, it’s a lock o’ daäys sin’, but I remember them daäys, for I was put by my master to the Rydal Mount as gardener-boy to keep me fra bad waays. And I remember one John Wudsworth, Mr. Wudsworth’s nevi, parson he was, dëad, like eneuf, afore this. Well, he was stayin’ there along o’ his missus, first week as I was boy there, and I was ter’ble curious, and was like enough to hev bin drowned, for they had a bath, filled regular o’ nights, up above, ya kna, with a sort of curtainment all round it. And blowed if I didn’t watch butler fill it, and then goa in and pull string, and down came t’ watter, and I was ’maazed as owt, and I screamed, and Mr. John come and fun’ me, and saäved my life. Eh, blessed barn, them was daäys lang sen’.

I asked whether Mr. Wordsworth was much thought of. He replied, ‘ Latterly, but we thowt li’le eneuf on him. He was nowt to li’le Hartley. Li’le Hartley was a philosopher, you see; Wudsworth was a poet. Ter’ble girt difference betwixt them two wayeses, ye kna.’ I asked whether he had ever found that poems of Mr. Wordsworth were read in the cottages, whether he had read them himself. ‘ Well you see, blessed barn,

there's pomes and pomes, and Wudsworth's was not for sec as us. I never did see his pomes—not as I can speak to in any man's house in these parts, but,' he added, 'ye kna there's bits in t' papers fra time to time bearing his naame.'

This unpopularity of Wordsworth's poems among the peasantry was strangely corroborated that very same day by an old man whom I met on the road, who said he had often seen the poet, and had once been present and heard him make a long speech, and that was at the laying of the foundation of the Boys' Schoolroom at Bowness, which was built by one Mr. Bolton of Storrs Hall.

On that occasion Mr. 'Wudsworth talked lang and weel eneuf,' and he remembered that he 'had put a pome he had written into a bottle wi' some coins in the hollow of the foundation-stone.'

I asked him whether he had ever seen or read any of the poet's works, and he answered, 'Nay, not likely; for Wudsworth wasn't a man as wreat on separate bits, saäme as Hartley Coleridge, and was niver a frequenter of public-houses, or owt of that sort.' But he added, 'He was a good writer, he supposed, and he was a man folks

thowt a deal on i' t' dale: he was sic a weel-meäning, decent, quiet man.'

But to return to my host at the public. Wordsworth, in his opinion, was not fond of children, nor animals. He would come round the garden, but never 'say nowt.' Sometimes, but this was seldom, he would say, 'Oh! you're planting peas?' or, 'Where are you setting onions?' but only as a master would ask a question of a servant. He had, he said, never seen him out of temper once, neither in the garden, nor when he was along o' Miss Dorothy in her invalid chair. But, he added, 'What went on i' t' hoose I can't speak till'; meaning that as an outdoor servant he had no sufficiently accurate knowledge of the in-door life to warrant his speaking of it. Wordsworth was not an early riser, had no particular flower he was fondest of that he could speak to; never was heard to sing or whistle a tune in his life; there 'was noa two words about that, though he bummed a deäl';—of this more presently.

'He was a plain man, plainly dressed, and so was she, ya mun kna. But eh, blessed barn! he was fond o' his own childer, and fond o' Dorothy, especially when she was

faculty stricken, poor thing; and as for his wife, there was noa two words about their being truly companionable; and Wudsworth was a silent man wi'out a doubt, but he was not aboon bein' tender and quite *monstrable* [demonstrative] at times in his oan family.'

I asked about Mr. Wordsworth's powers of observation. Had he noticed in his garden walks how he stooped down and took this or that flower, or smelt this or that herb? (I have heard since that the poet's sense of smell was limited.) 'Na, he wadna speak to that, but Mr. Wudsworth was what you might call a vara practical-eyed man, a man as seemed to see aw that was stirrin'.'

Perhaps the most interesting bit of information I obtained, before our pleasant chat was at an end, was a description of the way in which the poet composed on the grass terrace at Rydal Mount. 'Eh! blessed barn, my informant continued, 'I think I can see him at it now. He was ter'ble thrang with visitors and folks, you mun kna, at times, but if he could git awa fra them for a spell, he was out upon his gres walk; and then he would set his heäd a bit forrad, and put his hands behint his back. And then he would start a bumming, and it was bum, bum, bum,

stop ; then bum, bum, bum reet down till t'other end, and then he'd set down and git a bit o' paper out and write a bit ; and then he git up, and bum, bum, bum, and goa on bumming for long enough right down and back agean. I suppose, ya kna, the bumming helped him out a bit. However, his lips was always goan' whoale time he was upon the gres walk. He was a kind mon, there's no two words about that : if any one was sick i' the plaace, he wad be off to see til 'em.'

And so ended my Easter Monday talk with the poet's quondam gardener's boy, the now typical beerhouse-keeper, half pleased, half proud, to remember his old master in such service as he rendered him, in the days when it was judged that to keep a boy out of mischief and from bad company it was advisable to get him a place at Rydal Mount.

I must ask you next to take a seat with me in a waller's cottage. If tea and bread and butter is offered, you had better take it also, it is almost sure to be pressed upon you, and it is of the best. I will be interrogator, only by way of introduction saying, that our host is a splendid type of the real West-

moreland gentleman labourer, who was in his days a wrestler too, and whose occupation at the building of *Foxhow* and *Fiddler's Farm* in the Rydal Valley, often allowed him to see the poet in old times.

‘Well, George, what sort o’ a man in personal appearance was Mr. Wordsworth?’

‘He was what you might ca’ a ugly man,—mak of John Rigg much,—much about seame height, 6 feet or 6 feet 2,—smaller, but deal rougher in the face.’

I knew John Rigg by sight, and can fancy from the pictures of the poet that the likeness is striking in the brow and profile.

‘But he was,’ continued George, ‘numbledy in t’ kneas, walked numbledy, ye kna, but that might o’ wussened wi’ age.’ In George’s mind age accounted for most of the peculiarities he had noticed in the poet, but George’s memory could go back fifty years, and he ought to have remembered Wordsworth as hale and hearty. ‘He wozn’t a man as said a deal to common fwoak. But he talked a deal to hissen. I often seead his lips a gaäin’, and he’d a deal o’ mumblin’ to hissel, and ’ud stop short and be a lookin’ down upo’ the ground, as if he was in a thinkin’ waäy. But that might ha’ growed on him wi’ age, an’ aw, ye kna.’

How true, thought I, must have been the poet's knowledge of himself.

And who is he with modest looks,
And clad in sober russet gown?
He murmurs by the running brooks,
A music sweeter than their own;
He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noonday grove.

And indeed, in all the reminiscences I have obtained among the peasantry, these lines force themselves upon one as corroborated by their evidence.

'He' [Mr. Wordsworth], continued George, 'was a deal upo' the road, would goa moast days to L'Ambleside i' his cloak and umbrella, and in later times fwoaks would stare and gaum to see him pass, not that we thowt much to him hereabouts, but they was straängers, ye see.'

It is curious, though natural, perhaps, to find a sort of disbelief among the natives in the poet's greatness, owing somewhat to the fact that it 'was straängers as set such store by him.' They distrust strangers still, almost as much as they did in old Border-times.

But the secret of Wordsworth's unpopularity with the dalesmen seems to have been that he was shy and retired, and not

one who mixed freely or talked much with them.

‘We woz,’ said George, ‘noan of us very fond on ’im; eh, dear! quite a different man from li’le Hartley. He wozn’t a man as was very compannable, ye kna. He was fond o’ steanes and mortar, though,’ he added. ‘It was in ’48, year of revolution, one Frost, they ca’d him rebellious (Monmouth), and a doment in Ireland. I mind we was at wuk at Fiddler’s Farm, and Muster Wudsworth ’ud come down maist days, and he sed “it sud be ca’èd Model Farm,” and sa it was.’

Speaking of Foxhow, he said, ‘He and the Doctor [Dr. Arnold], you’ve mappen hard tell o’ t’ Doctor,—well, he and the Doctor was much i’ yan anudder’s company; and Wudsworth was a girt un for chimleys, had summut to saay in the makkin’ of a deal of ’em hereaboot. There was ’maist all the chimleys Rydal way built efter his mind. I can mind he and the Doctor had girt argiments aboot the chimleys time we was building Foxhow, and Wudsworth sed he liked a bit o’ colour in ’em. And that the chimley coigns sud be natural headed and natural bedded, a lile bit red and a lile bit yallar. For there is a bit of colour i’ t’ quarry stean

up Easedale way. And heèd a girt fancy an' aw for chimleys square up hauf way, and round t'other. And so we built 'em that road.' It was amusing to find that the house chimney-stacks up Rydal way are in truth so many breathing monuments of the bard. The man who with his face to the Continent passed in that sunny pure July morn of 1803 over Westminster Bridge, and noticed with joy the smokeless air, rejoiced also to sit 'without emotion, hope, or aim, by his half-kitchen and half-parlour fire' at Town End, and wherever he went seems to have noted with an eye of love

The smoke forth issuing whence and how it may,
Like wreaths of vapour without stain or blot.

But if from the highland huts he had observed how intermittently the blue smoke-curls rose and fell, he was most pleased to watch on a still day the tremulous upward pillars of smoke that rose from the cottages of his native dale. In his *Guide to the Lakes* (page 44) Wordsworth has said, 'The singular beauty of the chimneys will not escape the eye of the attentive traveller. The low square quadrangular form is often surmounted by a tall cylinder, giving to the cottage chimney

the most beautiful shape that is ever seen. Nor will it be too fanciful or refined to remark that there is a pleasing harmony between a tall chimney of this circular form and the living column of smoke ascending from it through the still air.'

And my friend George's memory of Mr. Wordsworth's dictum about the need of having the chimney coign 'natural headed and natural bedded, a lile bit red and a lile bit yaller' is again found to be true to the life from a passage in the same *Guide to the Lakes* (p. 60), in which the poet, after stating that the principle that ought to determine the position, size, and architecture of a house (viz., that it should be so constructed as to admit of being incorporated into the scenery of nature) should also determine its colour, goes on to say 'that since the chief defect of colour in the Lake country is an over-prevalence of bluish-tint, to counteract this the colour of houses should be of a warmer tone than the native rock allows'; and adds, 'But where the cold blue tint of the rocks is enriched by an iron tinge, the colours cannot be too closely imitated, and will be produced of itself by the stones hewn from the adjoining quarry.' How beautiful the

colouring of the Rydal quarry stone is, and how dutifully the son of the poet carried out his father's will in his recent rebuilding of a family residence near Foxhow, may be judged by all who glance at the cylindrical chimneys, or look at the natural material that forms the panels of the porch of the 'Stepping-stones' under Loughrigg.

I rose to go, but George detained me. For he was proud to remember that upon one occasion Mr. Wudsworth had keenly watched him as he put forth his feats of strength in the wrestling ring at Ambleside, 'in the chuchyard, day efter t' fair, forty or fifty years sen,' and had passed a remark upon him. It was in the days 'when fowks wrestled for nowt no mair than a bit o' leather strap.' And George had 'coomed to pit,' as the saying is, and 'Efter comin agaeen ya man and throwin' him, and anudder and throwin' him,' was last man in against a noted wrestler, one Tom Chapman. He had agreed for one fall. Mr. Wordsworth was 'leukin' on.' George and his antagonist 'com' together, and Chapman fell. 'And I mind that I was mair pleased wi' Mr. Wudsworth's word than wi' t' strap (or belt), for fowks tell't me that he keepit

saying, 'He must be a powerful young man that. He must be a strong young man.'

So ends our chat with honest George, the waller. We will next interview a man who at one time, for more than eleven years, saw Wordsworth almost daily. This was in the days that Hartley Coleridge lived at the Nab Cottage, or, as our friend puts it (with a touch of menagerie suggestion in it), 'i' t' daays when *he kep' li'le Hartley* at t' Nab,'—for our friend was Coleridge's landlord. I had considerable difficulty here, as in almost all my interviews with the good folk, of keeping to the object or subject in hand. For li'le Hartley's ghost was always coming to the front. 'Naäy, naäy, I cannot say a deal to that, but ye kna li'le Hartley would do so-and-so. Li'le Hartley was t' yan for them. If it had been Hartley, noo, I could ha' tell't ye a deäl.' And so on.

But in this particular instance my difficulty was trebled, for my friend evidently nursed the idea that Wordsworth had got most of 'his potry out of Hartley,' and had in return dealt very hardly with him, in the matter of admonishment and advice, while at the same time Mrs. Wordsworth, in her

capacity of common-sense accountant, with a strict dislike to wasteful expenditure or indiscriminate charity, had left something of bitter in his cup of Rydal Mount memories ; and the old man would gladly enough pass over a Wordsworth leaflet for a folio page of li'le Hartley. 'But he too would be true in his speech, and would speak as he 'kna'ed,' neither more nor less. In his judgment Mr. Wordsworth was a 'plainish-faaced man, but a fine man, tall and lish (active), and allus aboot t' roads. He wasn't a man o' many words, wad walk by you times eneuf wi'out sayin' owt particler when he was studyin'. He was allus studyin' and you med see his lips gaen as he went aboot t' roads.' He did most of his study upo' the roads. I suppose,' he added, 'he was a cliverish man, but he wasn't set much on by nin on us. He lent Hartley a deäl o' his beuks, it's sartain, but Hartley helped him a deäl, I understand, did t' best part o' his poems for him, sae t' sayin' is.'

'He wad often come i' t' efterneun and hev a talk at t' Nab, and would gang oot wi' Hartley takkin' him by t' arm for long eneuf. And when Hartley was laid by at t' last, Muster Wudsworth com doon ivery

day to see him, and took communion wi' him at t' last.'

'Then Mr. Wordsworth and Hartley Coleridge were great friends?' I asked.

'Nay, nay, I doant think li'le Hartley ever set much by him, nevver was verra friendly, I doubt. Ye see, he [Mr. Wordsworth] was sae hard upon him, sae verra hard upon him, gev him sae much hard preaching about his ways.'

'Well, but Mrs. Wordsworth was kind to Hartley?' I said.

'Mappen she was bit I nivver saw it. She was' [and here the old man spoke very deliberately, as if this was the firmest conviction of his life]—'she was verra on-pleasant, vara on-pleasant indeed. A close-fisted woman, that's what she was.' But further inquiry elicited the reason of this personal dislike to the poet's wife, and a narrative of it will probably win a public verdict for the lady of Rydal Mount, with damages for libel against the man who so faithfully kep' li'le Hartley at the Nab, and so made his lodger's wrongs his own.

'Well, you see,' he continued gravely, 'I mind yance I went up to t' Mount to exe for sattlement of account, for Mrs. Wudsworth paid for Hartley's keep, time he

lodged at t' Nab, and I had fifteen shillings i' t' beuk agin Coleridge for moneys I'd lent him different times. And she was verra awkward and on-pleasant, and wouldn't saddle, ye kna, for she thowt that Hartley had been drinkin' wi' it. But,' he added, 'howiver, I wrote to his mother, as lived in London, and she wreat to me and tell't me I was to lend a shilling or two as Hartley wanted it, and efter that she saddled wi' me for his lodgment hersel', but Mrs. Wudsworth was verra on-pleasant.'

I was glad to change a subject that so distressed him, and asked how the poet was generally dressed, and of his habits. 'Wudsworth wore a Jem Crow, never seed him in a boxer in my life,—a Jem Crow and an auld blue cloak was his rig, and *as for his habits, he had noan*, niver knew him with a pot i' his hand, or a pipe i' his mouth. But,' continued he, 'he was a girt skäter for a' that'—(I didn't see the connection of ideas—pipes and beer don't generally make for good skating),—'noan better i' these parts—could cut his own name upo' t' ice, could Mr. Wudsworth.'

Before rising to go, I asked, 'Which roads were the favourites of the poet?'

‘Well, well, he was ter’ble fond of going along under Loughrigg and ower by t’ Red-bank, but he was niver nowt of a mountaineer, allus kep’ about t’ roads.’

This was a bit of news I had not expected, but we will bear it in mind, and test its truth in future conversations with the poet’s peasant contemporaries.

Our next talk shall be with one of the most well-informed of the Westmoreland builders, and I am indebted to Wordsworth’s love of skating for an introduction to him. For making inquiries as to this pastime of the poet, I had chanced to hear how that Wordsworth had gone on one occasion to figure a bit by himself upon the White Moss Tarn. How that a predecessor of my friend the builder who lived near White Moss Tarn had sent a boy to sweep the snow from the ice for him, and how that when the boy returned from his labour he had asked him, ‘Well, did Mr. Wudsworth gie ye owt?’ and how that the boy with a grin of content from ear to ear had rejoined, ‘Nay, bit I seed him tumble, tho’!’

I determined to seek out the builder and have the story first-hand, and was well repaid ;

for I heard something of the poet's gentle ways that was better than the grotesquely humorous answer of the boy who saw him fall.

The poet's skate had caught on a stone when he was in full swing, and he came with a crash on to the ice that starred the tarn and the lad, who had thought 'the tumble' a fair exchange for no pay, had been impressed with the quiet way in which Wordsworth had borne his fall. 'He didn't sweär nor say nowt, but he just sot up and said, 'Eh boy, that was a bad fall, wasn't it?' And now we are walking along briskly towards Grisedale, with the recounter of the story: 'Kna Wudsworth! I kent him weel,—why, he larnt me and William Brown to skäte. He was a ter'ble girt skater, was Wudsworth now; and he would put ya hand i' his breast (he wore a frill shirt i' them daays), and t'other hand i' his wäistband, same as shepherds dea to keep their hands warm, and he would stand up straight and swaay and swing away grandly.'

'Was he fond of any other pastime?' I asked.

'Naay, naay, he was ower feckless i' his hands. I nivver seed him at t' feasts, or wrest-

ling, he hadn't owt of Christopher Wilson in him. Nivver was on wheels in his life, and wad rayther ha' been a 'tailor upon horse-back happen, but he was a gey good un on t' ice, wonderful to see, could cut his neame upon it, I've hard tell, but nivver seed him do it.'

So that the rapture of the time when as a boy on Esthwaite's frozen lake Wordsworth had

Wheeled about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home, and shod with steel,
Had hissed along the polished ice,

was continued into manhood's later day; and here was proof that the skill which the poet had gained, when

Not seldom from the uproar he retired,
Unto a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng
To cut across the reflex of a star,

was of such a kind as to astonish the natives among whom he dwelt.

My friend had known Wordsworth well, and what was better, knew his poems too. 'Here is t' verra spot, you'll mappen hev read it i' t' beuk, where Wudsworth saw Barbara feeding her pet lamb. She tell't

me hersel. I was mending up t' cottage there at t' time. Eh, she was a bonny lass! they were a fine family a' t' lot o' Lewthwaites. She went lang sen and left, but she tell't me t' spot wi' her ain lips.' As I peered through the hedge upon the high-raised field at my right, I remembered that Barbara Lewthwaite's lips were for ever silent now, and recalled how I had heard from the pastor of a far-away parish that he had been asked by a very refined-looking handsome woman, on her death-bed, to read over to her and to her husband the poem of *The Pet Lamb*, and how she had said at the end, 'That was written about me. Mr. Wordsworth often spoke to me, and patted my head when I was a child,' and had added with a sigh, 'Eh, but he was such a dear kind old man.'

We passed on in silence till we were near 'Boon beck,' and opposite Greenhead ghyll, 'That,' said my companion, 'is a cottage as we used to ca' i' these parts t' Village Clock. Yan, I'se fergitten his neame, a shep, lived here, and i' winter days fowks fra far eneuf round wad say, "Is t' leet oot i' t' shep's cottage?" then you may wind t' clock and cover t' fire (for you kna matches was scarce and

coal to fetch i' them days); and of a morn-
ing "Is t' leet i' t' winder? is t' shep stirrin'?
then ye maunt lig nea langer," we used to
saay.' My friend did not know that this
too was in 't' beuk,' as he called it,—
that Wordsworth had described "the cottage
on a spot of rising ground,"

And from its constant light so regular,
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named the Evening Star.

Onward we trudged, entered the pastures
leading to the Grasmere Common that stretches
up to the Grisedale Pass, there sat, and had a
talk as follows, the Tongue Ghyll Beck mur-
muring among the budding trees at our feet :

'Why, why, Wudsworth nevver said much
to t' fowk, quite different fra lile Hartley,
as knawed t' inside o' t' cottages for miles
round, and was welcome i' them a'. He
was distant, ye may saäy, verra distant. He
wasn't made much count on "nayther i'
these parts," but efter a time fwoaks began
to tak his advice, ye kna, aboot trees, and
plantin', and cuttin', and buildin' chimleys,
and that mak o' things. He hed his say at
t' maist o' t' houses i' these parts, and was
verra particler fond of round chimleys.'

It was delicious this description of the path to fame among his countrymen the poet had taken, but my friend explained himself as he went on :

‘He was yan as keppit his heäd doon and eyes upo’ t’ ground, and mumbling to hissels; but why, why, he ’ud never pass folks draining, or ditching, or walling a cottage, but what he’d stop and say, “Eh dear, but it’s a pity to move that stean, and doant ya think ya might leave that tree?”’¹ I mind there was a walling chap just going to shoot a girt stean to bits wi’ powder i’ t’ grounds at Rydal, and he came up and saaved it, and wreat summat on it.’

‘But what was his reason,’ I asked, ‘for stopping the wallers or ditchers, or tree-cutters, at their work?’

‘Well, well, he couldn’t bide to see t’ faäce o’ things altered,¹ ye kna. It was all along of him that Grasmere folks have their Common open. Ye may ga now reet up to t’ sky ower Guzedale, wi’out liggin’ leg

¹ Readers who may chance to have seen the letter Wordsworth wrote to the local paper when he heard the news of the first railway invasion of the Lake district, will notice how accurately true this piece of testimony is.

to t' fence, and all through him. He said it was a pity to enclose it and run walls over it, and the quality backed him, and he won. Fwoaks was angry eneuf, and wreat rhymes about it; but why, why, it's a deal pleasanter for them as walks up Grisedale, ye kna, let alean reets o' foddering and goosage for freemen i' Gersmer.'

'But Mr. Wordsworth was a great critic at trees. I've seen him many a time lig o' his back for long eneuf to see whedder a branch or a tree sud gang or not. I mind weel I was building Kelbarrer for Miss S——, and she telt me I med get to kna Wudsworth's 'pinion. Sea I went oop til him as he com i' t' way, and he said, "Ay, ay, t' building wad dea, and t' site wad, but it's verra bare, verra bare."

'I mind anudder time I was building t' hoose aboon Town End, wi' a lock of trees and planting round, and he said to me, "Well, well, you're fifty years in advance here": he meant it was grawed up weel.

'And I mind yance upon a time at Hunting Stile thereaway he coomed up. "Now, Mr. Wudsworth, how will it goa?" I said. He answered me, "It'll dea; but where are the trees?" and I said, "Oh, it's weel

eneuf for trees, it nobbut wants its whiskers.” “How so?” said he. “Why, it’s a young ’un,” I said, “and we doant blame a young ’un for not hevin’ it’s hair upo’ it’s faace.” And he laughed, and he said, “Very good, a very good saying; very true, very true.” But he was ter’ble jealous of new buildings.

‘As for Mrs. Wudsworth, why, why, she was a verra plain woman, plainest i’ these parts, and she was a manasher an’ aw, and kepp t’ accounts. For ye kna he nivver knew about sec things, nayder what he had or what he spent.’

As we rose to continue our climb, my friend looked at the trees in the little stream-bed below us, and said, ‘In my days there was a deal of wild fruit in these parts. We hed toffee feasts i’ t’ winter, and cherry feasts i’ t’ summer,—gey big gedderings at t’ cherry feasts.’

‘Did you ever see Wordsworth at one?’

‘Nivver, he nobbut followed ya amusement: that was skating, as I telt ye.’

‘Had he any particular friends among the shepherds?’ I asked.

‘Nay, nay, not as ever I kent or heard on; but he wozn’t a mountaineer, was maistly doon below about t’ road.’

‘But what was his favourite road?’

‘Oh, roond by Gersmere and t’ Red Bank and heam again, wiowt ony doubt. He wad gang twice i’ t’ day roond by Mr. Barber’s there. He was a girt walker roond there, and a’most as girt a eater. Why, why, he wad git breakfast at heam, poddish or what not, and then come wi’ Miss Wudsworth roond t’ lake to Mr. Barber’s, and fall in wi’ them, and then off and roond agean, and be at Barber’s at tea-time, and supper up agean before gaen heam. And as for her, why Miss Wudsworth, she wad often come into t’ back kitchen and exe for a bit of oatcake and butter. She was fond of oatcake, and butter till it, fit to stéal it a’most. Why, why, but she was a ter’ble cliver woman, was that. She did as much of his potry as he did, and went completely off it at the latter end wi’ studying it, I suppose. It’s a verra straange thing, noo, that studying didn’t run on i’ t’ family.’

It was, I thought, a little hard to expect that the poet should have handed on the torch, or to speak with disrespect of his sons because they only thought in prose. But it was evidence in my friend, at least, of a profound belief in the genius of the Rydal poet and tree-and-building critic of old days.

And it would have been a guess shrewdly made that it was Wordsworth's brotherhood with him, in the interests of his builder life, and jealous care for architecture in the vales, that had made the bond so strong and the belief in the poet so great, and exclusive. We descended into the valley, took tea together at the Swan Inn, and chatted on: now learning that Wordsworth was a regular attendant at Grasmere Church, now that he would often in church-time be like a dazed man,—forget to stand up and sit down, turn right round and stare vacantly at the congregation. 'But I mind ya daay perticler, when he and Hartley and I cam oot o' t' church tagedder. I said, "What did you think of the sermon, Mr. Wudsworth?" and he answered me, "Oh, it was verra good, and verra plain"; and I said, "Saame here, Mr. Wudsworth"; and li'le Hartley put his heëad o' ya side, and squeaked out, "Oh, did ye think it was good? well, well, I was in purgatory the whole time."'

The stars were overhead as we left all that was left—and that was little enough—of our cosy evening meal; and, bidding good-night, I went home, with more Wordsworth memories to keep me company.

It was by happy accident that I was enabled to have a chat with one of the best types of our half-farmer, half hotel-keeper, only a few days before he left the Rydal neighbourhood for good, after a sojourn of sixty-five years therein. We met at the house of a friend where he had been to pay his last rent due, and as I entered the room I was conscious of a be-whiskied conversationally aromatic air that boded well for a reet doon good crack.

‘Kna Wudsworth! I sud kna him, if any man sud, for as a lad I carried t’ butter to t’ Mount, as a grawin’ man I lived and worked in seet on him, and I lig noo upon t’ verra bed-stocks as he and his missus ligged on when they were first wed, and went to Town End thereaway.’

‘Now tell me,’ said I, ‘what was the poet like in face and make?’

‘Well in mak he was listyish. I dar say I cud gee him four inches, now I suddent wonder but what I could, mysen.’ My informant stood about six feet four, or four and a half. ‘He was much to leuk at like his son William; he was a listy man was his son, mind ye. But for a’ he was a sizeable man, was t’ fadder, he was plainish featured,

and was a man as hed nea pleasure in his faace. Quite different Wudsworth was fra li'le Hartley. Hartley allus hed a bit of smile or a twinkle in his faace, but Wudsworth was not loveable i' t' faace by nea means, for o' he was sizeable man, mind ye.'

'But,' I interrupted, 'was he not much like your friend John Rigg in face?'

'He med be t' seame mak, ye kna, much about; but, John Rigg hes a bit pleasant in his faace at wust o' times, and Wudsworth, bless ye, never had noan.'

'Was he,' I said, 'a sociable man, Mr. Wordsworth, in the earliest times you can remember?'

'Wudsworth,' my kindly giant replied, 'for a' he hed nea pride nor nowt, was a man who was quite one to hiss, ye kna. He was not a man as fwoaks could crack wi', nor not a man as could crack wi' fwoaks. But thear was anudder thing as kep' fwoaks off, he hed a terr'ble girt deep voice, and ye med see his faace agaan for lang eneuf. I've knoan folks, village lads and lasses, coming ower by t' auld road aboon what runs fra Gersmer to Rydal, flayt a'most to death there by t' Wishing Gate to hear t' girt voice a groanin' and mutterin' and thunderin'

of a still evening. And he hed a way of standin' quite still by t' rock there in t' path under Rydal, and fwoaks could hear sounds like a wild beast coming fra t' rocks, and childer were scared fit to be dëad a'most.'

'He was a great walker, I know,' I broke in. 'Which were his favourite roads? and was he generally on the hills, or did he keep pretty much to the valleys?'

'He was a gey' good walker, an' for a' he hed latterly a pony and phaeton, I nevver yance seed him in a conveyance in t' whole o' my time. But he was niver a mountain man. He wad gae a deal by Pelter-bridge and round by Red Bank, but he was maist terr'ble fond o' under t' Nab, and by t' auld high road to t' Swan Inn and back, and verra often came as far as Dungeon Ghyll. You've happen heerd tell o' Dungeon Ghyll; it was a verra favourite spot o' Wudsworth's, noo, was that, and he yance med some potry aboot a lamb as fell ower. And I dar say it was true eneuf a' but t' rhymes, and ye kna they war put in to help it oot.'

For the life of me, as he spoke, I didn't understand whether he meant that the rhymes fished the lamb out of the Dungeon Ghyll pool,

or helped the poet out with his verses, but I suppressed a smile and listened attentively.

‘But for a’ he was a distant man, they war weel spoken on, mind ye, at the Mount,’ continued my voluble friend. ‘They stood high, and he was a man as paid his way and settled verra reglar; not that his potry brought him in much, a deal wasn’t made up in beuks till efter he was deäd. Ay, and they lived weel. Many’s the time, when I was a lad, and I went wid butter, I could ha’ been weel content to be let aloan for a bit i’ t’ pantry. ’Ticing things there, mind ye. And they kep’ three sarvants. I kent t’ cook and t’ housemaid weel, and yan they called Dixon, smart lile chap as iver was seen in these parts, but ter’ble given over to cauld watter and temperance—he woz. Coomed out of a “union,” but verra neat, and always a word for onybody, and a verra quiet man, particlar quiet, nivver up to nea mischief, and always sat at heam wi’ t’ lasses a mending and sewing o’ evenings, ye kna.’

I didn’t know, but guessed at once the sort of simple stay-at-home ways and happy-family style of quiet domestic service, known to the circle of maidens, who, after their day’s work,

sat with their needles and thread entertaining the guileless Dixon.

‘And what is your memory of Mrs. Wordsworth?’

‘Well, every Jack mun have his Jen, as t’ saying is, and they was much of a mak. She was a stiff little lady, nowt verra pleasant in her countenance neyther.’ I soon found out that the word unpleasant was being used in a double sense, and was intended to convey rather an over-seriousness of expression perhaps than any disagreeable look or ill-tempered face. ‘Ye’re weel awar,’ continued the former hostel-keeper, ‘that we mun a’ hev troubles, times is not a’ alike wi’ t’ best on us; we hev our worrits and our pets, but efter yan on ’em, yan’s countenance comes agean, and Wudsworth’s didn’t, nor noan o’ t’ family’s, as I ivver seed.’

‘Did you ever see Mr. Wordsworth out walking—round Pelter-bridge way?’

‘Ay, ay, scores and scores o’ times. But he was a lonely man, fond o’ goin’ out wi’ his family, and saying nowt to noan of ’em. When a man goes in a family way he keeps together wi’ ’em and chats a bit wi’ ’em, but many’s a time I’ve seed him a takkin’ his family out in a string, and niver geein’ the

‘You see, blessed barn, it’s a lock o’ daäys sin’, but I remember them daäys, for I was put by my master to the Rydal Mount as gardener-boy to keep me fra bad waays. And I remember one John Wudsworth, Mr. Wudsworth’s nevi, parson he was, dëad, like eneuf, afore this. Well, he was stayin’ there along o’ his missus, first week as I was boy there, and I was ter’ble curious, and was like enough to hev bin drowned, for they had a bath, filled regular o’ nights, up above, ya kna, with a sort of curtainment all round it. And blowed if I didn’t watch butler fill it, and then goa in and pull string, and down came t’ watter, and I was ’maazed as owt, and I screamed, and Mr. John come and fun’ me, and saäved my life. Eh, blessed barn, them was daäys lang sen’.

I asked whether Mr. Wordsworth was much thought of. He replied, ‘Latterly, but we thowt li’le eneuf on him. He was nowt to li’le Hartley. Li’le Hartley was a philosopher, you see; Wudsworth was a poet. Ter’ble girt difference betwixt them two waayses, ye kna.’ I asked whether he had ever found that poems of Mr. Wordsworth were read in the cottages, whether he had read them himself. ‘Well you see, blessed barn,

there's pomes and pomes, and Wudsworth's was not for sec as us. I never did see his pomes—not as I can speak to in any man's house in these parts, but,' he added, 'ye kna there's bits in t' papers fra time to time bearing his naame.'

This unpopularity of Wordsworth's poems among the peasantry was strangely corroborated that very same day by an old man whom I met on the road, who said he had often seen the poet, and had once been present and heard him make a long speech, and that was at the laying of the foundation of the Boys' Schoolroom at Bowness, which was built by one Mr. Bolton of Storrs Hall.

On that occasion Mr. 'Wudsworth talked lang and weel eneuf,' and he remembered that he 'had put a pome he had written into a bottle wi' some coins in the hollow of the foundation-stone.'

I asked him whether he had ever seen or read any of the poet's works, and he answered, 'Nay, not likely; for Wudsworth wasn't a man as wreat on separate bits, saäme as Hartley Coleridge, and was niver a frequenter of public-houses, or owt of that sort.' But he added, 'He was a good writer, he supposed, and he was a man folks

rose to go; he to his farm, I to my notebook.

I pass over sundry interviews of minor import, and will detail as accurately as I can the result of several conversations with one who as a boy lived as page, or butler's assistant, at Rydal Mount, and now himself in total eclipse (for he is blind) delights to handle and show with pride the massy, old-fashioned square glazed hand-lantern, that lighted his master the poet on his favourite evening walks.

We go through Ambleside to reach his house, and call for a moment at the shop of a man for whom on his wedding-day Hartley Coleridge wrote the touching sonnet in which he describes himself as

Untimely old, irreverently grey,

and he will tell us that Mr. Wordsworth was not a man of very outgoing ways with folk, a plain man, a very austere man, and one who was ponderous in his speech. That he called very often at his shop, and would talk, 'but not about much,' just passing the day. He will tell us that Mrs. Wordsworth was a very plain-faced lady, but will add that, 'for

aw that, Mr. Wordsworth and she were very fond of one another.'

There is, as one would expect, a sort of general feeling among the dalesmen that it was rather a strange thing that two people so austere and uncomely in mere line of feature or figure should be so much in love, and so gentle and considerate in their lives. I say as we should expect, for the men of Lakeland and the women of Lakeland are notably comely, their features notably regular. I do not myself know of a single instance of a really ugly married woman among the peasants that I have met with in Westmoreland. But at the same time we must remember that the word 'plain,' whether applied to dress or feature, in Westmoreland, means for the most part simple, homely, unpretending, unassuming, and is often a term of honour rather than dispraise.

We shall, perhaps, as we near the village where our blind friend lives, meet with an old man who will tell us that he helped to bear both the poet and his wife to the grave, but he will add that he was not 'over weel acquaint wi' 'em, though he knas the room they both died in,' and that the time he saw most of the poet was the occasion

when he conducted Queen Adelaide 'to see the Rydal Falls, and all about.'

We have got to the end of our walk, and here, picking his way by means of his trusty sounding-staff backwards and forwards in the sunshine he feels, but cannot see, is the old man, or rather old gentleman who in former times 'took sarvice along of Mr. Wudsworth,' and was 'so well pleased with his master that he could verra weel hev ended his days at t' Mount,' but found it was over quiet, and, wanting to see the world beyond the charmed circle of the hills, left a good place, but not before he had formed his opinion of both master and mistress, and obtained indelible impressions of their several personalities, and had conceived along with these an affection for them which glows in his words as he talks to us of them. 'Mr. Wudsworth was a plaain-feaced man, and a mean liver.' The description, as I hinted in the preface, would have staggered a philo-Wordsworthian unaccustomed to the native dialect. 'But he was a good master and kind man; and as for Mrs. Wudsworth, she was a downright cliver woman, as kep' accounts, and was a reg'lar manasher. He

never know'd, bless ye, what he hed, nor what he was wuth, nor whether there was owt to eat in t' house, nivver.'

'But you say,' I interposed, 'that he didn't care much whether there was or was not food in the house.'

'Nay, nay, Wudsworth was a man as was fond of a good dinner at times, if you could get him to it, that was t' job; not but what he was a very temperate man i' all things, vara, but they was all on 'em mean livers, and in a plain way. It was poddish for t' breakfast, and a bit o' mutton to t' dinner, and poddish at night, with a bit of cheese happen to end up wi'.'

'You said it was hard to get him to his meals: what did you mean?' I asked.

'Weel, weel, it was study as was his delight: he was aw for study; and Mrs. Wudsworth would say, "Ring the bell," but he wouldn't stir, bless ye. "Goa and see what he's doing," she'd say, and we wad goa up to study door and hear him a mumbling and bumming through it. "Dinner's ready, sir," I'd ca' out, but he'd goa mumbling on like a deaf man, ya see. And sometimes Mrs. Wudsworth 'ud say, "Goa and brek a bottle, or let a dish fall just outside door

in passage." Eh dear, that maistly wad bring him out, wad that. It was nobbut that as wad, howivver. For ye kna he was a verra careful man, and he couldn't do with brekking t' china.'

'And was he continually at study in-doors, or did he rise early, go out for a walk before breakfast, and study, as I have heard, mostly in the open air?' I asked.

My friend answered at once. 'He was always at it, ye kna, but it was nowt but what he liked, and not much desk-wark except when he had a mind tul it. Noa, noa, he was quite a open-air man was Wudsworth: studied a deal about t' roads. He wasn't particlar fond of gitten up early, but did a deal of study efter breakfast, and a deal efter tea. Walked t' roads efter dark, he wad, a deal, between his tea and supper, and efter. Not a verra conversable man, a mumblin' and stoppin', and seein' nowt nor neabody.'

'And what were his favourite roads?' I asked, in an innocent way.

'Well, he was verra partial to ganging up to Tarn Foot in Easedale, and was fondest o' walking by Red Bank and round by Barber's (the late Miss Agar's house), or else



DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

t'other way about and home by Clappersgate and Brankers, under Loughrigg. Never was nowt of a mountaineer, and Miss Dorothy 'companied him. Eh dear, many time I've watched him coming round wi' t' lantern and her efter a walk by night. You've heard tell of Miss Dorothy, happen. Well, fwoaks said she was cliverest mon of the two at his job, and he allays went to her when he was puzzelt. Dorothy hed t' wits, tho' she went wrang, ye kna.'

'Then,' said I, 'Mrs. Wordsworth did not help the poet in writing his verses?'

'Naay, naay. Why, she was a manasher, niver a studier, but for a' that there's nea doot he and she was truly companionable, and they wer terr'ble fond o' yan anudder. But Dorothy hed t' wits on 'em boath.'

'And he was very devoted to his children,' I put in.

'Ay, ay, he was fond of children like eneuf, but children was nivver verra fond o' him. Ye see he was a man 'o moods, nivver nea certainty aboot him; and I'se not sea sure he was fond of other fwok's bairns, but he was verra fond o' his ain wi'out a doot.'

'And was he very popular among the folk hereabouts?'

‘There’s nea doot but what he was fond of quality, and quality was very fond o’ him, but he niver exed fowk about their wark, nor noticed t’ flocks nor nowt: not but what he was a kind man if fwoaks was sick and taen badly. But farming, nor beast, nor sheep, nor fields wasn’t in his way, he exed nea questions about flocks or herds, and was a distant man, not what you might call an outward man by noa means. And he was verra close, verra close indeed, fra curious men. He’d gang t’ other side o’ t’ road rather than pass a man as exed questions a deal.’

It was a mercy, I thought to myself, that no Wordsworth Society had invited me to collect and write down the results of a cross-question tour in those days.

‘But surely,’ I said, ‘he had some particular cottage or farm where he would go and have a crack.’

‘Naay, naay. He would go times or two to farm Dungeon Ghyll way, but he wasn’t a man for friends. He had some, neäh doubt, in his walk of life; he was ter’ble friends with the Doctor (Arnold) and Muster Southey, and Wilson of Elleray and Hartley Coleridge. I’ve seen him many a time takkin’ him ‘out arm i’ arm for a talking. But he

was specially friendly with Professor. I mind one time when we was driving, me and Mrs. Wudsworth and Miss Wudsworth, to Kendal, and Professor Wilson was superintending making o' a bye road up by Elleray there, and he was in his slippers. Nowt wud do but Wudsworth must git down and fall to talkin', and we went on; but he didn't come, and Mrs. Wudsworth said, 'Ye mun drive on; he'll pick us up at Kendal: no knowing what's got him now Professor is wi' 'im.' Well, well, she was right. For after putting up at Kendal, who should walk in but Wudsworth and Professor wi'out any shoes to his feet neäther, for Wilson was in his slippers, and 'ad walk'd hissels' to his stockin' feet, and left his stockin' on t' road an aw' far eneuf before they got to Kendal.'

'But it was strange,' I said again in a suggestive way, 'that Mr. Wordsworth should be so well "acquaint" with Professor Wilson, for he was a great cock-fighting and wrestling man, was he not, in his day?'

'Ay, ay, biggest hereaboot,' my old friend replied. 'It's queer, but it was along o' his study, ye kna. Wudsworth was nivver nea cock-fyhter nor wrestler, no gaming man at all, and not a hunter, and as for fishing

he hedn't a bit o' fish in him, hedn't Wudsworth—not a bit of fish in him.'

'I have read in his books,' said I, 'things that make me feel he was kind to dumb animals.'

'Naay, naay,' my friend broke in, 'Wudsworth was nea dog fancier; and as for cats, he couldn't abide them; and he didn't care for sheep, or horses, a deal, but if he was fond of owt, it was of t' *li'le ponies*. He was a man of fancies, ye kna. It was a fancy of his. He was fond of li'le ponies, nivver rode a horse in his life, nivver.'

'But he went over a deal of ground in his time. Was he always on his feet?' I said.

'He went ower a deal mair ground nor ever he saw, for he went a deal by night, but he was a man as took notice, ye kna, nivver forgat what he saw, and he went slow.'

'But,' said I, 'how did he cover so much ground; was he never on wheels?'

'Ay, ay, wheels, to be sure, he druv a' times, ye kna, in t' cart. He, and Mrs. Wudsworth, and Dorothy and me, we went a deal by cart Penrith way, and Borradaile and Keswick way, and Langdale way at times.'

'What sort of a cart?' I inquired.

‘Dung cart, to be sure. Just a dung cart, wi’ a seat-board in t’ front, and bit of bracken in t’ bottom, comfortable as owt. We cud ga that way for days, and far eneuf. Ye kna in them days tubs wasn’t known. Low-wood was nobbut a cottage, and there was never abuv six or seven ponies for hiring at Ambleside. ‘Tubs we ca’ t’ covered carriages, tubs wasn’t known in these parts. But happen there was a tub or two at Kendal.’

‘And you must have gone precious slowly,’ I said.

‘Ay, ay, slow eneuf, but that was Mr. Wudsworth’s fancy, and he’d git in and go along, and then he git down into t’ road and walk a bit, and mak a bit, and then he git oop and hum a bit to himsel, and then he’d stop and hev a leuk here and there for a while. He was a man as noticed a deal o’ steans and trees, verra particler aboot t’ trees, or a rock wi’ ony character in it. When they cut down copy woods in these parts they maistly left a bit of t’ copy just behint wall to hide it for him, he was a girt judge in sic things, and noticed a dēal.’

‘And would he,’ I asked, ‘tell you as you jogged along in the cart, which mountain

he was fondest off, or bid you look at the sunset?’

‘Ay, ay, times he would say, “Now isn’t that beautiful?” and times he would hum on to himself. But he wasn’t a man as would give a judgment agean ony mountain. I’ve heard girt folks ’at com to t’ Mount say, “Now, Mr. Wudsworth, we want to see finest mountain in t’ country,” and he would say, “Ivery mountain is finest.” Ay, that’s what he would say.’

‘But I have been told that his voice was very deep,’ I put in, in a happy-go-lucky way. ‘Had he a loud laugh now?’

‘I don’t mind he iver laughed in his life, he’d smile times or two. Ay, ay, his voice was deep one; bit I mind at t’ family prayers in t’ morning he’d read a bit o’ *the* Scripture to us, and he was a verra articulate, particlar good reader, was Mr. Wudsworth, always hed family prayer in the morning, and went to church wi’ prayer-book under his arm, verra regular yance upon the Sunday, he did.’ My friend added, ‘He was quite a serious-minded man, and a man of moods.’

Here ended my talk with the old retainer at the Mount. But I was not allowed to go

off until I had seen and handled the old-fashioned candle lattern by which, as my kind informant put it, the poet 'did a deal of his study aboot t' roads efter dark.'

And so must end my plain unvarnished tale. I leave my indulgent readers to form their own conclusions; merely suggesting that the collected evidence points to a simple plainness and homeliness of life such as remains indelibly impressed upon the men of Westmoreland, whose own lives are less simple in these latter days, when ostentation and vulgar pride of wealth in a class above them have climbed the hills and possessed the valleys.

The testimony of the witnesses I have been fortunate enough to bring before you seems to agree in depicting Wordsworth as he painted himself, a plain man, continually murmuring his undersong as he passed along by brook and woodland, pacing the ground with unuplifted eye, but so retired, that even the North country peasant, who does even yet recognise the social differences of class and caste that separate and divide 'the unknown little from the unknowing great,' was unable to feel at home with him. 'Not a very companionable man at the best of times' was their verdict. But I think all the while

these dalesmen seem to have felt that if the poet was not of much count as a worldly-wise farm or shepherd authority, nor very convivial and free and easy as li'le Hartley was, nor very athletic and hearty as Professor Wilson, there was a something in the severe-faced, simply habited man 'as said nowt to neabody' that made him head and shoulders above the people, and bade them listen and remember when he spoke, if it was only on the lopping of a tree or the building of a chimney-stack. 'He was a man of a very practical eye, and seemed to see everything,' was the feeling.

And turning from the poet to his wife, whilst one can see how the household need of economy in early Town End days gave her to the last the practical power of household management that had almost passed into a proverb, one can see also how true was that picture of the

Being breathing thoughtful breath,

A perfect woman, nobly planned,

To warn, to comfort, and command.

'He never knawed, they say, what he was wuth, nor what he hed i' t' house.' She did it all. Then, too, it is touching to

notice how deep and true the constant love between man and wife was seen to be, how truly companions for life they were, and that, too, in the eyes of a class of people who never saw that

Beauty born of murmuring sound
Had passed into her face,

and half marvelled that the spirit wed with spirit was so marvellously closer than fleshly bond to flesh.

Upright, the soul of honour, and for that reason standing high with all; just to their servants; well meaning and quiet in their public life; full of affection in their simple home life; so it seems the poet and his wife lived and died. Thought a deal of for the fact that accounts were strictly met at the tradesmen's shops, they were thought more of because they were ever ready to hear the cry of the suffering, and to enter the doors of those ready to perish.

I do not think I have been able to tell the world anything new about the poet or his surroundings. But the man 'who hedn't a bit of fish in him, and was no mountaineer,' seems to have been in the eyes of the people always at his studies; 'and that because he couldn't help it, because it was his hobby,'

for sheer love, and not for money. This astonished the industrious money-loving folk, who could not understand the doing work for 'nowt,' and perhaps held the poet's occupation in somewhat lighter esteem, just because it did not bring in 'a deal o' brass to the pocket.' I think it is very interesting, however, to notice how the woman part of the Rydal Mount family seemed to the simple neighbourhood to have the talent and mental ability; and there must have been, both about Dorothy Wordsworth and the poet's daughter Dora, a quite remarkable power of inspiring the minds of the poor with whom they came in contact, with a belief in their intellectual faculties and brightness and cleverness. If Hartley Coleridge was held by some to be Wordsworth's helper, it was to Dorothy he was supposed by all to turn if 'ivver he was puzzelt.' The women had 'the wits, or best part of 'em,'—this was proverbial among the peasantry, and, as having been an article of rural faith, it has been established out of the mouths of all the witnesses it has been my lot to call.

WITH THE BLACK-HEADED GULLS IN CUMBERLAND.

THERE is no part of the Cumberland coast so full of witchery and romance as the point where Muncaster Fell comes down to the sea. The rivers of Irt, Mite and Esk, with their memories of the pearl-fisheries of olden time, swirl down toward the ancient harbour of the mythic 'King Aveling's Town.' One cannot look across the pool at full tide without thought of how the Vikings pushed their ships ashore here, when they came from Mona's Isle to harry Cumberland.

But the sound of earlier civilisations is in our ears as one gazes across the Ravenglass sand-dunes ; for here beside us is the great cavern of ancient oaken-logs and earth, wherein the Cymri buried their dead in prehistoric time, and there within a stone's throw still upstands the seaside residence of some great Roman

general, who was determined apparently to enjoy a well-heated house, and to do honour to the *genius loci*. No one who visits 'Walls' Castle, as it is called, but must be struck with the remains of the 'tepidarium,' and the little niche that held the statue of the tutelary god, or a bust of the presiding Cæsar, within the ample hall.

Away at our back rises the Muncaster Fell with its grey beacon-tower, its herd of deer, its wind-blown oaks, its primrose and bluebell haunted woods, that slope towards the Vale of Esk. Further inland, sheltered by its magnificent wall of forestry, stands rose-red one of the most interesting of our northern castles, with its long terrace-lawn of quite unequalled grace and loveliness. There in sheltered combe the rhododendrons bloom from earliest spring, and the air will to-day be honeysweet from laurel-flower far and wide.

But I was bent on seeing an older people than Cymri, Roman, Viking, or Castle-Lord, albeit the line of Pennington reached far into the past, and suited well his ancient castle hold. I had come in the last week of April, by courteous invitation, to renew acquaintance with that fast-growing colony of black-headed gulls that make the dunes of Ravenglass famous.

A boat was called, and leaving the pebbly beach that 'Stott of Oldham' so delights to paint, we rowed across the flooding tide of the Ravenglass harbour to the sand-dunes of happy quietude, where the oyster-catchers were sunning themselves, and where the sheldrake in her nesting season loves to hide. As one went forward over the dunes one felt back in the great desert of the Badiet-Tih, and expected to see Bedouins start from the ground, and camels come in single file with solemn sway round the sedge-tufted, wind-blown hillocks and hummocks of glaring sand.

Then suddenly the silence of the waste was broken by a marvellous sound, and a huge cloud of palpitating wings, that changed from black to white and hovered and trembled against the grey sea or the blue inland hills, swept by overhead. The black-headed gulls had heard of our approach, and mightily disapproved of our trespass upon their sand-blown solitude.

We sat down and the clamour died : the gulls had settled. Creeping warily to the crest of a great billow of sand, we peeped beyond. Below us lay a natural amphitheatre of grey-green grass that looked as if it were starred with white flowers innumerable. We showed our heads and the flowers all took wing, and the air was

filled again with sound and intricate maze of innumerable wings.

We approached, and walking with care found the ground cup-marked with little baskets or basket-bottoms roughly woven of tussock grass or sea-bent. Each casket contained from two to three magnificent jewels. These were the eggs we had come so far to see. There they lay—deep brown blotched with purple, light bronze marked with brown, pale green dashed with umber, white shading into blue. All colours and all sizes; some as small as a pigeon's, others as large as a bantam's. Three seemed to be the general complement. In one nest I found four. The nests were so close to one another that I counted twenty-six within a radius of ten yards; and what struck one most was the way in which, instead of seeking shelter, the birds had evidently planned to nest on every bit of rising ground from which swift outlook over the gull-nursery could be obtained.

Who shall describe the uproar and anger with which one was greeted as one stood in the midst of the nests? The black-headed gull swept at one with open beak, and one found oneself involuntarily shading one's face and protecting one's eyes as the savage little sooty-brown heads swooped round one's head. But

we were not the only foes they had had to battle with. The carrion crow had evidently been an intruder and a thief; and many an egg which was beginning to be hard set on, had been prey to the black robber's beak. One was being robbed as I stood there in the midst of the hubbub.

Away, for what seemed the best part of a mile, the 'gullery' stretched to the north in the direction of Seascale; and one felt that, thanks to the public-spirited owner of the seaboard, and the County Council of Cumberland, the black-headed gull was not likely to diminish in this generation.

Back to the boat we went with a feeling that we owed large apologies to the whole sea-gull race for giving this colony such alarm, and causing such apparent disquietude of heart, and large thanks to the lord of Muncaster for his ceaseless care of the wild sea-people whom each year he entertains upon his golden dunes.

That evening I went back in memory to the marvellous sight in the Gullery at Ravenglass. My thoughts took sonnet form as follows:

THE HOPE OF LIFE.

Sudden the lilies of each lonely mound
Sprang into voice and palpitating wing;
I seemed a guilty and unwelcome thing;

Ten thousand shadows round me and around
Perplexed the air and danced along the ground ;
Each sooty head, in passion, dared to fling
A world's defiance—and I felt the sting
And arrows of that deprecating sound.

Then gazing downward at my feet I saw
The silent cause of all these sorrowful cries,
—Large jewels, blotched and brown and green and blue,
In simple caskets wove from rushy straw ;
I thanked high Heaven for hearts so good and true,
And shared their hope for life that never dies.

They are a far-wandering nation these black-headed gulls. I had seen separate members of the tribe on the banks of the Neva, and later, on the banks of the Nile ; for they are an adventurous race, and may be found as far north as Archangel and as far south as Nubia, but the next time that I saw them in any number they had changed not only their appearance but their manners. The black or, more properly speaking, brown head of the gull had become grey. It seems they only wear their black helmets or bonnets in summer time. Now it was winter, and they were as mild as doves—tamer birds could hardly be seen, and the history of their taming, as indeed of their presence so far inland as the Keswick valley, was very simple.

There had been a very cruel wholesale

poisoning of the fish in the river Greta—the black-headed gulls had heard of it, and came up the Derwent in great numbers to the feast. It cannot have been all pleasure, and to judge by the looks of some of the greedier of the class colic abounded. Whether it was the abundance of the feast or the after pain, that made an impression on the gull, I know not, but from that day to this the black-headed gentry of the seaboard have had such affection for our vale that any storm at sea or any scarcity of food brings them in great numbers to our valley pastures.

We had a hard winter three years ago, and wherever the rooks were seen upon the ground, the black flock was dappled with the white sea gull, and the dolorous voice of the crow was drowned in the laughter of the black-headed gull.

Very grateful were we in those sad and sombre winter mornings to hear the gulls laughing round our house-roofs, and not the least enjoyable thought as we went to our breakfast-table was the knowledge that these wild sea-people had come to trust us, and were willing to be our almoners.

There was one house in the valley, set upon a grassy hill overlooking the lake, which

seemed especially to have charm for the bird visitors. Swift of ear, as of eye, the black-headed gulls noticed that the family went to breakfast at the sound of a gong. No sooner did that gong echo across the lawn, than the heaven became white with wings—a click at the gate was heard, and a maid with a large pancheon of food specially prepared—hot and tasty—was seen to come on to the grass and toss out the meal, in splotches, round about her. Then what had been a silent grey undulating cloud of wings broke up into a tangled mass of down-sweeping pink legs and up-sweeping white wings, and with the noise of laughter and talk unimaginable, the happy people fell to feeding.

I do not think that anything more dainty can be imagined than that swift balance of up-tilted wing and down-reaching rosy feet, unless it be the consummate care and nicety with which, before the black-headed gull put beak to food, it tucked those long sweeping slender wings close to its side.

Now and again as they fed, the whole flock would rise momentarily into air and float up as though blown from the earth by some invisible breath, and then, as silently and simultaneously, sink to earth again.

At times one noticed how, rising up, they seemed to move in exactly one position, moving their yellow rosy-stained beaks and grey heads from right to left as though they feared an enemy. Yet they had no need to fear, for it was quite clear that the rooks had been specially engaged by them to be their sentinels. There they sat each in solitary sable-hood, on the trees all round the lawn,—policemen on guard, and of such good manners, that until the visitors from the sea had eaten and were full, they did not think of claiming their share of the broken victual.

What astonished one most as these black-headed gulls came morning after morning to the sound of the gong, was their apparent determination to lose no time about their food. They sat down to table and rose up as one bird, but they were not more than ten minutes about their meal, and there was some reason for this. There were other breakfast tables spread for them on other lawns; the gong at Derwent Hill was after all but summons to a first course.

How mild, how gentle, with what dove-like tenderness did these grey-headed people of the sea appear as with merry laughter they sailed about my head, their feet tucked

up like coral pink jewels against their breast ;
how unlike those fierce black-headed guardians
of their nests and young, who had dashed
at one, with open beak and scolding voice
and angry wing, upon the spring-tide dunes
of Ravenglass.

AT THE GRASMERE PLAY.

WHAT a wonderful people these Westmoreland folk are ; we see them on the Wrestling Ground at Pavement end, and we think we never saw such 'playing.' We enter a Westmoreland dale farm, and we feel, if ever men and women were born to make two ends meet by the care of sheep or cattle, these are the people. We take lodgings in a Westmoreland village for a holiday season, and though it may be quite true that the landlady doesn't rave about the scenery, and is rather of the type of the good woman-body who had lived at Rydal Mount before she became lodging-house keeper, and who said to my friend, 'Yes, yes, I am a tidy good cook and a decentish housekeeper, but I don't know nowt about sunsets or sic like, and I don't need, they've never been in my line,' it is at the same time true that, for looking after one's creature wants and entering into the doings

of every day and making one feel part and parcel of the household, a Westmorland house-keeper is bad to beat.

But though I thought I knew the capacity of Westmoreland folk pretty well, a new surprise was in store for me as I took my seat in the temporary play-house at Grasmere and learned that Westmoreland folk can not only play in the Grasmere wrestling ring, but can play on the boards and before the footlights also. It is quite true that the Grasmere people have had nearly a generation of training in the dramatic art. A late rector, who was much interested in looking after the recreations of the village, had translated for them many a simple pastoral play from the French, and hardly a Christmas came round, but he and his family, one of whom was herself a talented writer of country plays, trained the villagers to give their neighbours a play, and the children in the Bands of Hope to act charades. Since his time another family who are much honoured at Grasmere, and who have the same kind of enthusiasm for the dramatic capacity of the village, had carried on the work, with the result that at a moment's notice, for any simple play the daughter of the house might write or adapt, she could count on having as her players seventeen or eighteen of the

villagers who would seem born for the parts she entrusted to them. There was no rivalry, no 'fratching' from house to house because this person or that person was not selected for this or that particular part; on the contrary, the village had such confidence in the conductor of the village *troupe* that if Miss S. thought that So-and-so was to take this part and So-and-so the other, that was enough, and not another word was to be said. Meanwhile the village had come to look upon the village play as part of its very life and soul. Grasmere in winter time would not be recognised by the average tourist. It is a village of peace absolute and tranquillity beyond words.

From the earliest times 'Cursmas' has been looked upon as a time when everybody in the dale should enjoy himself. In the old days, when the fiddlers went round from farm to farm between Christmas-day and New Year's Day, and when the Merry Night (or Murry Neet) was held from place to place, the Grasmere folk knew that, however hard they worked for the rest of the year, at least they would 'laike' until the Twelfth Night, and precious little work would go forward in the dales for the first fortnight of each glad new year. The desire for some simple and rational form of

amusement with the beginning of every year has never died out of their blood, so that a village play seems to fill a need which is part of their very nature. 'Why, we could not live without it,' said a Grasmere body to me; 'it's the brightest spot in our lives.' 'I can't tell you how dramatic it makes me feel,' said another. 'I am going thro' my dialogue at all times o' day.' My husband said, 'You've had company to-day then.' 'Ay, ay,' I replied, 'rare company. I was taking two or three parts in second Act, you see, and changing voices, that was all.'

'But where do you get your theatrical properties?' I said. 'Who manages the scene-shifting and all the rest of it?' 'Oh, as for scene-shifting, that is all managed by that great hairy-faced man that you saw going down the road just now; he is a grand stage manager and has been at it for twenty years or more.' I did not see him again until after the close of the performance, when I noticed him with his pocket-handkerchief in an unconventional way fanning out the footlights, and then going up on a ladder to puff out the oil lamps above the stage. 'And as for properties,' the good dame replied, 'if you mean by that the things we have on the stage, well everything is lent—there is

crockery from one house and chairs from another, and the dresses, why they are the old originals that were worn by our grandmothers, and great-grandmothers. We all know to what farm or to what house we must go for this or that particular dress, and it is lent very willingly.' 'And do you have large audiences?' I said. 'Large audiences, well, if th' room would hold double the number we could fill it, because folk of all maks and sizes come together. This year we are giving a special afternoon performance for the quality, but I am told that all reserved seats have been booked for weeks.'

It was growing dark as I stood by the cottage door. The omnibus, as it drove down from the Raise gap with folk from Keswick coming to see the play, was sending sparks out behind from its 'slipper,' as though it were making fireworks. And soon I saw the lamp-lighter lighting up the oil lamps in the quaintly intricate lanes of the village beside the Mere. Knots of people were gathered already at their door-ways talking of the play, and already folk were drawing towards the village hall near the Red Lion. I soon joined them, and passed up a break-neck stairway to a big barn-like room, the

back part of which was filled with rough boards knocked up into temporary benches, and the forepart had wooden cottage chairs for reserved seats. The drop-scene was down—the lake and island with Helm Crag and Dunmail Raise, as seen from Loughrigg, on a summer evening.

A big moon shone in a solid sort of way in mid-heaven, and was repeated at intervals right down through the picture, as though the scene-painters would say: 'This is the moon, it is rising now, and there it is fully risen.' But I was assured that this was the result of some accident by fire that had taken place years ago in the said drop-scene, and that these moons were, after all, only the patches that repaired the beautiful picture. Three fiddlers and a piano were making lively music when the bell tinkled and the curtain went up. It was a very simple scene—the village carpenter sitting in his shop working away at a stool, but it was to the life; and the Jacob who was working there, with his red handkerchief round his throat, spoke and acted to the life, and well he might—he was a village carpenter. A tourist came upon the scene, and got very little change out of Jacob, and less still out of Jacob's mother, Mrs.

Rawlinson, who (after a very amusing dialogue with the tourist) determined to allow him to be her lodger. She made him pay double the usual price because he asked for 'sec a new faddlement as a seven o'clock dinner.' Dolly, the maid, comes in with a handkerchief bound over her head, as is the fashion of the North-country maids when they are dusting or brushing up. They fall to talk :

Mrs. Rawlinson : 'I'se goin' to have mair nor sebben shillings a room this time, but I was forced to ask a good price, for he'll be wanting late dinners, and a' maks o' cooking and faddlements. What does ta think wawm-lets 'll be, Dolly?'

Dolly : 'Nay, I never heard tell o' sec a thing.'

Mrs. Rawlinson : 'And grilled bones to his breakfast ; but I kna' what them'll be, just a marra bone served up hot in a napkin. I can mannish that finely. Then he talked about a dish o' curry ; that'll certainly be some mak o' a French stew, made rare and hot wid pepper and an onion or two.'

Dolly : 'What, thou's goin' to be sadly tewed.'

Mrs. Rawlinson : 'Nay. I was nobbut a bit put about at first, but I mean to ask

Betty Braithwaite to lend me her beuk as larns yan to mak hundreds and hundreds of things 'at I never heard of, nor naebody else, I wud think.'

As long as I live I shall remember the delightful get-up of this said Mrs. Rawlinson, with her high black cap and flower in it, and her old-fashioned criss-cross shawl, and her spotless white 'brat'; and the way in which she pronounced the word 'omelette' as 'waumlett' convulsed the house.

The second scene in that first act was one that went home to the hearts of all, for if the Westmoreland folk love one thing more dearly than another it is 'a sale.' The sale is really the excitement of the winter time. I believe that if nobody was changing farms they would compel someone in the neighbourhood to pretend that he was, that a sale might be held. It is not the fierce excitement of bidding one against the other that causes the great gathering at the sale, but 'everybody's tied to go,' as they say—bound to go to the sale, just as everybody is bound to go when they are bid to a funeral. It would not be friendly not to do so, and high, low, rich and poor, one with another, meet at the sales, as De Quincey has reminded us, to see

one another and to hear how the world is stirring.

The Grasmere Players in this sale scene were all of the manner born, and a young mason played the part of 'Tom Mashiter' (auctioneer) with great delight to himself and to his audience.

'Here's t' fadther and muther and t' dowter he cried, as he put three teapots together. 2s. 6d. for the lot just to get us into the bidding! Here's a pair of copper scales; see how true they hang! Now I durst bet there's not above half a dozen among us as honest as them is. There's not, howiver; and I know who's yan o' the half-dozen; ye can settle the other five amang you. Three an' six. Three an nine. Come, be quick. Nay, I'll not wait. I'll tak some on ye in, ye'll see, if ye don't bid quicker——'

And the scales were knocked down 'mid roars of laughter.

'Here's another good jar, yan o' t' auld fashion, wid a pair o' good lugs to hod by. A penny for it I have bid; who'll say tuppence? Tuppence for you, Sarah. It's a real good un, yan o' t' rare auld-fashioned mak, like me an you, Sarah. I think there's nobbut us two left o' the auld lang-eared breed.'

Then there were quilts sold with a deal of very amusing talk to make them go off. One was in rags and tatters, but the auctioneer suggested that it might do for a sick horse or a sick cow. I was listening with great amusement, and I heard an old fellow beside me say, 'Well, but things is goin' ower cheap,' and in another moment jerked out, 'A penny—here,' and was not a little astonished that his bid was not taken. I only mention this to show you how to the life the whole thing was done, and with what deep interest the spectators gazed upon the play.

In the second act the plot thickens, and the interest centres in the two chief actors of the little play—Aaron Hartley, with his apparently rejected addresses to the statesman's daughter up at Hardcragg Farm, and Betty Braithwaite. Aaron comes into his mother's kitchen, and, as far as any Westmoreland man dare let himself go, allows her to see that things are all up between himself and Betty. He must go off to 'Lunnon,' for he cannot face living on in the dale now, and all the hay grass but one meadow has been got in.

'I think I must be going away, muther, for a bit. I don't see but that you'll mannish

finely without me. We've gotten a' the hay in but t' midder, and that'll not take so lang. It's nobbut a light crop, and then it'll be verra slack till bracken time, and what, Jonty's match to make a good start with that if I sudn't be back.'

Just then the farm servant Jonty enters. I believe that he was a coachman in the village, but he was a consummate actor, and his quaint, silent ways and the lifting up of his hand and scratching his head behind his ear when talking were quite admirable. He has had, from youth up, the wish to have something from London, and he tells Aaron that he's 'wonderin' whether he could mannish to bring him a "spead" fra Lunnon' when he comes back; 'but maybe the railway folk wad charge ower dear for carryin' on it.' Aaron chaffs him out of the idea that a 'spead' made in London is better than one made in Kendal, and suggests a nice silk handkerchief. 'I never thowt o' that,' says Jonty; 'that wad be as like as aught.' Libby, the pretty farm servant breaks in here, and says: 'I wish tha would think on it, and not be so ready with thy jacket sleeve.'

'Ye'll not can tell me (says honest Jonty) how much t' silk handkercher'll be until ye've

bought it, I doubt ; but if ye'll send word I can just send ye the brass in a letter.'

And, saying, 'Well, I mun see all's reet afore goin' to bed,' the faithful farm servant leaves the cottage to go round the byre.

But the actress of the piece throughout is Aaron's mother, Mrs. Hartley. She sits there at her knitting, with her pretty crossover on her shoulders, sair troubled at heart by her son Aaron's love affair ; she drops her stitches, for her eyes can hardly keep back the tears, but she seems to know intuitively how much and how little comfort she may give her son, and how far she may insist upon his confidences. The attempt on her part to make it appear as if it did not matter at all and that everything will come right in the end is very bravely done. Fewest words are best.

'Good night, mother,' says Aaron. 'You'll not mind a' I've said.'

'Nay, lad, not I. Good night.'

And so the curtain falls. The second scene in the second act brings Jonty and Mattha Newby (the village tailor) together. Mattha, as I heard, was the son of a village tailor. To-day, evidently from his boyhood's remembrances, he is able to play the tailor's part well. Jonty has

been 'wrestling with a dyke' and torn his jerkin, and Mattha volunteers to mend it. A song was introduced into this scene which I had written for the occasion. It ran as follows :

Come ! sweet April, whom all men praise,
Bring your daffodils up to the Raise,
Bid the delicate warbler trill,
Come with the cuckoo over the hill
Sprinkle the birch with sprays of green,
Purple the copses all between ;
Bend the rainbow, and swell the brooks,
Fill the air with the sound of rooks,
Rubies lend, for the larch to wear,
The lambs are bleating, and May is near.

August comes, and the speckled thrush
Sings no more in the lilac bush,
Lambs in the meadow cease to bleat,
The hills are dim with the noontide heat,
From all her hedges the rose is fled,
And only the harebell lifts her head ;
But green are the new-mown vales with grass
As if the Spring were again to pass,
And children bring from the far-off fell
The rose-red heather—the bee loves well,

Comes October with breath more cold,
She breathes, and the bracken turns to gold,
The cherry blushes as red as blood,
The rowan flames in the painted wood,
The larch-tree tresses are amber bright,
The birch is yellowing up on the height,

And over the valley and over the hill
A deep hush broods and the sheep are still,
But rainbow gossamers fill the air,
Tho' the old earth rests, the world is fair.

Now are the mountains winter-white,
Helvellyn shines in the clear moonlight ;
The carollers sing, and the Christmas bells
Send sweet messages up the fells ;
The old folk meet for their Christmas cheer,
The young folk skate on the frozen mere ;
But Spring is coming, the shy buds peep,
The snow-drop moves in her long, long sleep,
The lemon-light shines on the leafless larch,
And the wood grows purple to welcome March.

Fair, how fair, are the changing days
That keep us happy beneath the Raise,
We who, in honour of Oswald the King,
Our 'bearings' still to the Old Church bring,
We who here in the silent time
Act our part and carol our rhyme.
Seasons change, and our hair grows grey,
But merrily goes the Grasmere play,
And two things stay with us all the year—
Love of our valley, and heart of cheer.

It had been prettily set to music by a Grasmere lady, and the two bass voices chimed in with the two last lines in each verse, and Mattha the tailor and Jonty the farm servant gave great effect to the song by the sudden addition of their manly notes. Before the curtain falls on this scene, we learn that the tourist (to whom

we were introduced in the first scene), Mr. Augustus Mallister, who has heard that she is an heiress, is determined, if possible, to win the heart of Betty Braithwaite. He knows that Aaron's absence has made her heart grow fonder. He determines to write a letter, which shall be posted in London, purporting to come from Aaron, in which the absent lover declares that he has become engaged to an American girl ; and so the curtain falls.

In the last act, and the first scene, there is a pretty passage, although it is a pathetic one, between Mrs. Hartley and the girl Betty Braithwaite, to whom Mrs. Hartley has given Aaron's letters to read—one of them the fatal letter. In the last scene Norman Braithwaite and his wife, an excellent make-up, come in to talk matters over, and the letter from London amongst other things. Jonty remembers how that, on a certain day in August, the tourist chap, 'the fine gentleman' as he called him, had been spouting out a letter about an Aaron getting wed to an American, and they at once seemed to see light and to feel that the letter Mrs. Hartley had received was a forgery. Just at that time Aaron and Betty enter, and one can tell by a glance at them that it doesn't matter how many forged letters have been written in

London ; they have quite made up their minds to make a match of it. As for Mallister, 'the fine gentleman,' Jonty breaks in :

'Is it Mallister you're talkin' on? We weant see any more o' yon ne'er-do-weel here. I met t' p'liceman going off wid him to Kendal.'

Norman: 'T' p'liceman! What for?'

Jonty: 'It seems he's been wanted for some time. He's been up to some forgery or summat o' that mak.'

Poor Mrs. Rawlinson, 'the fine gentleman's' landlady, enters greatly distressed that the good name of her house has been compromised by letting lodgings to a forger. 'Why,' says she, 'I thought he was a gentleman, wi' his wawmlets to his breakfast, and his late dinners and siclike.' And so with the assertion that there is nothing to wait for and the wedding shall take place at Martinmas, the curtain goes down, and all's well that ends well.

During the acting it was quite plain that the actors themselves were as much interested as those who witnessed the play. 'I was fairly shamed of myself,' I heard one saying, 'to meet with ye when I came off the last time, for the tears on my face, but if you had given me a five pound note I could not have helped it.' Ah, thought I, that was the secret of

your acting so well. Now and again an actor in undress would pass down the room to have a look at the others as they performed their parts, and to report. They would come back with much encouragement to their fellow-players with such words as these: 'Eh, but it's a grand company now, and walls is beginning to stream now'; and in truth the heat of the room and the consequent vapour bath was a thing not to be easily forgotten. But if it had been twice as hot, and the hall had been twice as crammed, and the play had been twice as long, one could still have sat with real pleasure to see such perfect acting done with such simplicity and reality to the life. One wished that Will Shakspeare could have come along; how he would have blessed these village folk for their truth and their simplicity. And how good a thing, thought I, it is, that there should be a dull time at the English Lakes, so that, without any temptations to extravagance in scenery or setting of the plays—that would inevitably come with a wider public,—these naturaldale-folk can delight their fellow-villagers, by dramatic talent as real as it is remarkable.

JAMES CROPPER OF ELLERGREEN.

THE pattern life of a public-spirited country gentleman closed, when James Cropper of Ellergreen, with eye undimmed and natural force unabated, entered rest.

Come of an old Viking stock,—for his name is found in the *Landnama Bok of Iceland*,—he had inherited the best traditions of true philanthropy from his grandfather, who, with Zachary Macaulay, had worked for the emancipation of the slave. In him, too, ran something of the spirit of good old Quaker blood. Whole-hearted Churchman as he was, he loved as the Friends love, simplicity in form and directness in religious expression. In earliest days he had cared for social and industrial problems, and the sorrows of the labouring poor entered into his heart. It was his good fortune to be able, by becoming an employer of labour, in his paper mills at

Burneside, to face these problems and to become, as he always wished to become, the father rather than the master of his workmen.

He lived to see Burneside become, under his fostering care, a model village. He lived to see some of his endeavours, notably his idea of Co-operative Stores for the people, find acceptance far and wide. The guardianship of the poor was a sacred trust to him. As Chairman of the Board of Guardians at Kendal for twenty-five years, and as Vice-President of the Northern Poor Law Congress, he both learned and taught wisdom. Almost the last thing he talked with me about was a scheme for caring for that most helpless class of our poorer friends, the pauper imbeciles of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

He was in early days a keen politician, and represented his neighbouring town of Kendal for five years in Parliament. Latterly he had felt that he could not be a partisan, or rather that partisanship dulled sympathies, and though it was a grief to him at the time to leave the House at the redistribution of seats, he found so much more of home politics to hand for him to do, that he ceased to regret it.

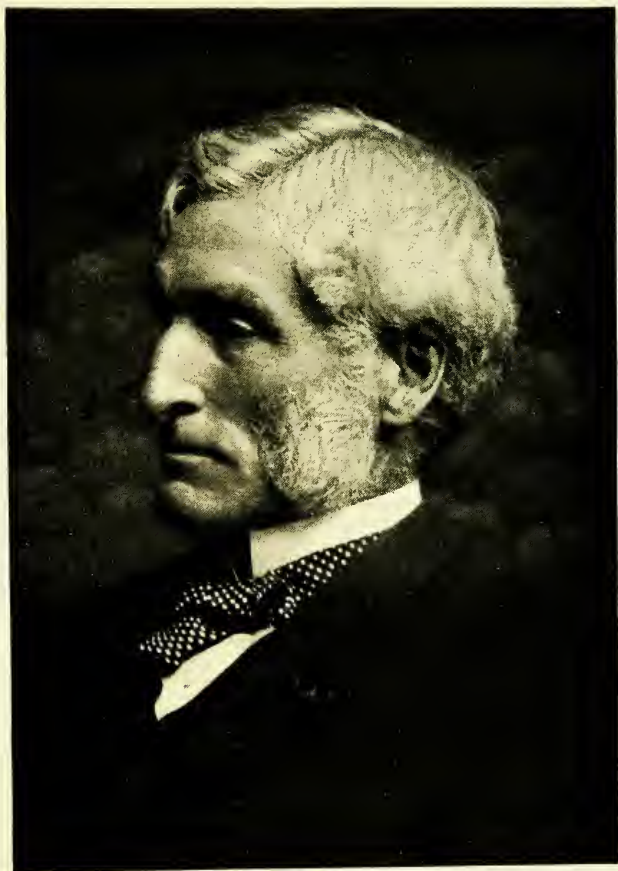
When the County Council in Westmoreland

met for its first time in 1888, they unanimously elected James Cropper to be their chairman, and to the day of his death his heart was in the work.

The Queen Anne's Bounty Board gave him the chance of helping the church of his love. The late Bishop of Carlisle, Harvey Goodwin, had no truer friend; and the present Bishop Bardsley testified to the constant help to church work in the diocese that this most earnest layman was always willing to bestow.

But it was the cause of education—elementary, secondary, public school, or university—that was nearest to his heart. As one of the Governors of Sedbergh, and Heversham and Kendal Grammar Schools, his counsel was constantly sought. As a believer in women's education, he founded a scholarship at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, and a bursary at the Edinburgh Medical School for the training of native Indian women as doctors.

He was Chairman of a Kendal Education Society which anticipated much of the present endeavour of the Code to secure better instruction for elementary teachers. He was never so happy as when he could gather the teachers on the lawn at Ellergreen, and hold counsel with them as to their future aims and their present



JAMES CROPPER OF ELLERGREEN.

progress. The idea of a pupil-teachers' centre at Kendal was his, and as Chairman of the County Council he was able to lend it substantial aid. When the Voluntary School Association came into being, he took up the idea warmly, and personally visited every school within his area, and made its wants and its difficulties his own.

There was not a day that this public benefactor did not do something to help his time. And if one asked oneself why it was he had the power to be a pillar of good in his generation, a kind of beacon and standard for higher and happier life in all classes of society round about him, the answer seemed to be that he had a heart which was for ever young, in a body that seemed as if age could not touch it—that his sympathies were not with the past, but with the present and the future ; that his enthusiasm for the better time coming never failed him ; that he believed that all things work together for good to them that fear God and keep His commandments.

The grace of this abundant hopefulness flowed out in all he did and said. 'Age could not stale his infinite variety,' because he never grew old. To see him with young men or little children was to see him at his best. To

know him in his home life was a privilege for which to be thankful.

But deeper than all his spring of hope and sympathy with the young and the new lay the fountain of poetry at his heart. He did not, I think, write poetry, but the love of it was a continual presence. He had the poet's heart, and entered into the poet's mind. For him, the practical public county magistrate and councillor, the spirit of the innermost was the joy of the imagination. This was the secret of his swift sympathy with nature and with man.

We met by appointment in the Tapestry Room of the Spanish Palace at the Paris Exhibition on October 12th, 1900. He was as cheery as ever.

'I have had a delightful week,' he said, 'I wish all my friends could have seen this wonderful exhibition. Yesterday I was at Chartres Cathedral. I never knew what stained glass was before; pray visit Chartres. It is a revelation to one.' Then he turned to the Spanish tapestries and went with deepest pleasure through the historic scenes that the needles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have left on deathless record. He seemed as young-hearted as a boy, and as fresh in his enthusiasm as if this Paris

Exhibition was the first he had ever seen, but he was seventy-seven and had seen more than falls to most of us to see, of all this world can show. I did not know as I shook hands and parted that Death already had shaken him by the hand.

That night the sharp pain of pneumonia was upon him. I saw him once again, at the bedside celebration of his last Holy Communion, and then I saw him dead. His beautiful face without a wrinkle in it with all the look of youthfulness come back—but, alas, without the bloom, beneath that ample crown of snow-white hair which for years past had added such dignity to his refined and kindly presence. As I gazed, the one thought that came to me was this, did ever man pass so little weary, so full of keen interest and unabated enthusiasm after so long a pilgrimage, right up to the doors of that other world where, as we trust, all his fullest powers shall find full play, or enter these gates of life with so little pain?

He died in France and his body was borne across the sea and laid to rest in the valley he held most dear. It seemed as if all Westmoreland and Cumberland had come to Burneside to do him honour at the homegoing.

The coffin, covered with wreaths, was laid upon a simple wheeled bier in front of the doors of Ellergreen, and so taken by hand from the house to the church. It was his wish that no hearse should be used, and that this simpler method of carrying the body to its rest should be employed. Before the procession moved, many of those present came up to the coffin to see the beautiful photograph taken after death; and side by side of it the picture of his bride taken on her honeymoon. Beneath these two pictures were written the words from Christina Rossetti's poem :

‘Think of our joy in Paradise
When we’re together there,’

and beneath this a little note stating that these were the words which he had begged might be inscribed upon his tombstone.

Those who knew how ideal had been their wedded life, knew also how through all the long years of widowhood and the grief of separation that lent its pathos to his fine face, there had been one sweet music to which he moved—the music of the hope of a sure reunion, that had surely come with joy at last.

The sunlight faded from the near fells, and

sorrow filled the air. A single robin sang a note or two and was silent, and the leaves fell audibly to the ground. But all who gazed out east saw the blue Howgills and the further Pennine range shine out like burnished silver and gold, and thought of the glory of that far land to which our friend had gone.

The procession went up the drive and into the lane, and so down into the village, where every head seemed bowed and every home a house of mourning. The service, simple throughout, included his favourite hymn :

‘Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I live or die,’

and at the grave side a third hymn was sung which had been chosen by his daughter as expressive of the continuity of happy life in the world beyond. The bishop pronounced the benediction, the mourners placed their wreaths at the grave side ; silently the vast crowd melted away, and left to its long rest the body of one of the most public-spirited servants of the common good that Westmoreland has known. He will be as sorely missed as he will be surely mourned.

A DAY WITH ROMAN AND NORSE.

It was burning June. The sun shone on lake and fell. Skiddaw was cloudless and lifted into the clear heaven its purple lilac shade powdered with the fresh fern and the emerald green of the bilberry. The corn-crake cried in the valley, the throstle whistled from the larch plantation; in and out of the elder-blossom the tireless bees went humming, and the haymakers could hardly get on with their work for gazing at the exquisite beauty of the wild roses on the hedge. In Cumberland, as Southey said, we miss the violet, but we make up for our loss in April and May by the blush roses of the June. They embroider the lanes, they dance upon the hedgerows, they flash against the grey blue waters of the lake, they flutter against the green fellsides. Such roses! not faint in

colour and scent as we see in the South, but red of heart and filled with fragrance, wonderful wild roses of Cumberland.

What a day of life and loveliness it is! On the old Millbeck Hall door stone up yonder are the words, 'Vivere mori, mori vivere,' but we feel that the living, the living are the hearts that praise, and death is, even by suggestion, out of place here.

To-day as we dash along under Skiddaw to see where Roman and Norseman once had home, we feel that the same beauty was beheld by earlier races, and the wild rose that gladdens our sight was very dear to eyes of far-off generations, and has been a perpetual garden of life and loveliness for all the passing years.

We are going to see the camps of the warriors of old, and we do well to gather and put in hat and buttonhole the emblem of England's warrior saint, the good St. George. As one thinks of the flower, one's mind does not only go back to Pisanello and his picture of St. George away there in the church of St. Anastasia in Verona, but to the hundred shrines wherein are seen that fair Madonna, the Rose of God, whose painters honoured the wilding rose for her

sake, and gave it immortality on their canvases. To Roman Catholic and to Protestant alike, how significant and full of tender association is the wild dog-rose of Cumberland! How close it brings the church days of an older time back to the present dwellers in this country, seeing that both on Carlisle's city arms and Carlisle's bishop's coat of arms, the wild rose shines, memorial of the monastery that honoured the Rose of Heaven.

But to-day we are going back to times that antedate those mediaeval church days. We are on visit bent to Roman and Viking who dwelt in sight of Skiddaw—the cleft one, in the days,

‘When never a wild-rose men would braid
To honour St. George and the Virgin Maid.’

We dash on by Dancing Gate, a farm beyond Scalebeck, with its quaint holly trees, whose sons have never forgotten the art of dancing, on by Mirehouse with its memories of James Spedding and Thomas Carlyle and Alfred Tennyson, on under Ullock slope, and by Ravenstone till we reach an old farmhouse, quaint with its Jacobaeen door-pilasters.

‘For Orthwaite Hall and Overwater,’ said the coachman, ‘we should turn off here to

the right and go up the Rake,' as he slackened his paces.

There was an old Norse ring about that word 'rake,' for the Icelanders still talk of their sheep '*rachan*' just as our Cumberland shepherds do; when the sheep follow one after another along the mountain side, they are hereabouts said to be 'raking,' but though we were bent on a Norse chieftain's home we refused to ascend the Rake. It was very hot and sultry, and we preferred the shady woodland of Bassenthwaite 'parks,' and so drove forward. We passed the Vicarage house and the Bassenthwaite Church, crossed a small stream, and, turning sharply by a deserted chapel towards the village, drove by the village green, thence entering a kind of meadow road, were soon in shadow, and for more than a mile went, beneath bowery oak, and fragrant larch, and gleaming hazel, along this copse-lane sweet with wild woodruff and gay with lychnis, towards the hillside opposite the Dash, where stands Orthwaite or Overthwaite Hall. It is worth while turning for a backward gaze as we ascend the hill; Bassenthwaite and the fells that close round far Derwentwater look nowhere more beautiful than from here.

That little tarn on our left is not Overwater, but it has its history; one hundred sheep went on the ice one wintry day, broke through, and all were drowned. The current superstition is that the pike in that tarn are as large as donkeys; whether before or after the feast of plenty accorded by the mountain sheep is not told.

Here is Orthwaite or Allerthwaite Hall grim and grey, its little Elizabethan window mouldings, its diamond squares of glass, its quaint low-ceilinged dining room. There is a look of drear sadness and of pale sorrow about the quiet half-hall, half-farmstead, and there may well be, for its owner William George Browne, the traveller, went forth therefrom to explore Tartary and Bokhara in the year 1812, and being suspected by the Persian government of sinister design, was, under instruction from headquarters, taken captive beyond the Kizzil Ozan river, blindfolded and barbarously murdered. Poor Browne! he had better have stayed in sight of harmless Skiddaw, but his was the gipsy's mind, and though none knew quite why he journeyed, and his journeys in Africa, Egypt, and Syria show that he travelled more from love of wild roaming than for aught else, home for William George Browne had

no attraction in its sound. His was the restless wanderer's heart.

Now we leave the carriage, and while it goes round to pick us up at Whitefield Cottage on the Uldale and Ireby road, we descend into the meadows and find ourselves gazing on a large square entrenchment, at the angles of which were once raised mounds, lying to the south-west of Overwater. No Roman camp this, for Romans did not place their camps in the bottoms, unless they had a secure look-out above them, or a fortified camp on a height near by ; and Romans did not when they dug an entrenchment round their camp, throw the earth out to right and left and make an embankment either side their fosse, as it is plain was the case here ; besides there is but one entrance to the camp, and that was not the Roman way. No, the camp we are looking upon was probably the kraal or stockaded farmstead of a Norse chieftain, any time between 874 and 950 A.D.

Its owner probably came up the Derwent with Ketel, son of Orme, with Sweyn and Honig or Hundhr, what time they harried Cumberland under Ingolf or Thorolf the Dane. For aught we know, he may have been tempted hither by some sudden surprise-peep he got

of the Overwater tarn and neighbouring meadowland, from the heights of Skiddaw, the first time he clomb that double-fronted hill.

It is true that a Roman tripod kettle is said to have been discovered near, but the Romans were not the only nation on the earth that worked in bronze, and knew the advantage of putting legs to their kettles; and both in the museum of Copenhagen and Christiania such tripod kettles may be seen to-day that came from the hands of the Norsemen of old time.

As we gaze across the quiet meadow land to the north-east, we see the high raised hill, where it is more than probable that the Viking chieftains, who here had their steading, 'died into the ground,' as they expressed it, when the death hour came. At any rate that hill is called Latrigg, which may well mean the 'Hlad Rigg' or 'Ridge of the Dead,' and as at Keswick so here, the Vikings may have carried up their dead chieftains for their last long rest to yonder height. It is by some thought possible that the word Latrigg may come from Norse words that signify the 'Lair Ridge,' the ridge of the lair of wild beasts, and doubtless in those early days the farmer who built his stockade had cause to dread other wild beasts than such as now trouble the hen roosts

beneath Skiddaw. Now on still nights the shepherd of Underskiddaw may hear the fox of Skiddaw calling across the waters of Bas-senthwaite to the red-coated vixen at Barf, and hear her shrill bark answer to his cry, but then the wolf howled and the wild boar prowled, and there was need of stockade not only against man but against the creatures of the wild woodland.

We leave the meadow with its Viking memories, walk on to join our carriage at Whitefield Cottage, thence, driving along towards Uldale and Ireby, see, far off, the common of Ulph the Norseman that was often waked by John Peel's 'horn in the morning,' and, instead of descending into the valley that separates us from that long moor that stretches to Caldbeck, we turn sharply to the left, pass a lonely house of some pretension, and drive by a narrow lane through hedges covered with wild-rose; away to the west, upon surmounting the ridge, we suddenly come in sight of the littoral plain—all peacock green and blue, the Solway flashing in the distance—and the grey hills of bonnie Scotland beyond. We descend the hill and pull up at a lodge gate. "Snittle Garth," says the driver. The very name has a Scandinavian ring about it; we enter the

Park and pull up at a pleasant-looking country house.

By courtesy of the owner we pass in front of the garden, gay with its flowers, and full of the sense and sweetness of an English country house. We can hardly gaze at the camp we have come to see, so fair and beautiful is the vision outstretched before us of Bassenthwaite laid in gleaming whiteness beneath the dark hills of Wythop and the purple vastness of Skiddaw, so exquisite the shadowy foldings of the blue hills that take the eye far up beyond the gates of Borrodale to Gimmer Crag, to Great-End and far Scafell. But when we look at the camp we have come to see we find ourselves standing on a high plateau, sheltered on north and east and west by rising ground. The site of the camp is rectangular, eighty-three feet by thirty-one; isolated by a trench with regular scarp and counter-scarp. This trench is twelve feet broad at the bottom, twenty feet at the top; the scarp and counter-scarp are each nine feet, and the depth is five feet. The work, to all appearance, is freshly done, and but for the fact that no pottery has been revealed, might well be work of Roman engineers. As we wonder at the quaint oblong island of green carved in

the hill side, surrounded by its dry moat, we listen to what the sages say and archaeologists guess about its origin and intent.

‘The remains of a mediaeval pleasaunce,’ says one antiquarian.

‘Not a bit of it,’ says another, ‘this was no sheet of water for ornament, with an island in its midst, this was a Roman sanitary camp. Hither sick and sorry came the poor fellows, whom the frosts of Cumberland had pinched, or the dews of Cumberland had rheumatised, or the malaria of the Derwent Vale had febrified, or the swords and clubs of the stubborn British had wounded, and here girt round by friendly fence of water, sheltered from the wind, uplifted in this quiet pastoral scene, they built their rough wattle hospital, and prayed to the goddess of health.’

‘No, no,’ says a third antiquarian, no authority he, and therefore likeliest to be right. ‘This was a battle holme. Here in the olden time men met for holm-gauge or wager of battle ; on that oval sward was decided, in the sight of the assembled multitude, the feud of families or the strife of tribes.’

We can, as we gaze, conjure up the whole scene, and hear the crash of battle hammer, and see the flame of the circling brand ; but the

peace of the present subdues the passion of the past, and the sound of the quiet grass-cropping hard by of the unfearful sheep, the song of the thrush from the neighbour sycamore recalls us to such pastoral tranquillity as ill assorts with the stormy drama

‘Of old far-off unhappy things
And battles long ago.’

Now rejoining our carriage let us drive west, up hill, to the neighbouring Caermote. We shall feel all the time that the tribesmen, gathered at their battle holme, can follow us with their eyes, and wonder what on earth can possess us to leave them with their fierce axe play just going to begin, for the old deserted look-out camp on the slope a mile away. We leave the carriage to descend the hill to the south and await our arrival at the large square double camp of the Romans on the lower slope, and not without many pauses to wonder at fair scene of the seaward plain, we make our way up to the northern peak of Caermote Hill.

This, with its circular rampart, was probably the ‘mons exploratorius’ of the large double camp on the lower south-eastern slope, and a glorious look-out the Roman legionaries must have had, if on such a day of June they came

with their wild roses in, their hands to see the sun come with its wild rose over Helvellyn, or move slowly to its setting and turn the whole grey Solway into gold.

Down now we go southward across the pleasant green sward, negotiate one or two rather awkward fences, and bearing a little to the left, towards the main road that runs to Bewaldeth, we soon find ourselves in the midst of ramparts of the quaint double Roman camp. It is a camp within a camp, the larger of the two being about 180 yards by 160 yards square. There is evidence that the cohort that first encamped here must have felt that it was a place of much strategic importance, for they made the road from 'old Carlisle' to Keswick run right through the middle of it. The continuation of this road, though it remains untraced, probably ran along the east side of Bassenthwaite up to the tiny Roman watch camp at the 'Gale,' and so by Guardhouse towards Penrith, and to Causeway Foot, on the road to Ambleside.

They appear also to have felt that they were in a dangerous country when first they rested beneath Caermote, for they circled themselves with a triple rampart and a double fosse.

But not for ever was there to be war at the gates, even in Roman times. The cohort gave way to a 'century,' and the centurion, who remained to keep the way from 'old Carlisle' to Keswick open, was content to trust his safety from attack to the guardianship of a single ditch and rampart; and yet the fierceness of fire and sword must in after times have been felt again at this place. Not many years ago the ruins of some buildings near the north gate of the large camp were discovered, that had once been roofed with lead, but the buildings had been set on fire, and the lead had poured itself away into the ground. There was nothing to suggest that these buildings had been of Roman workmanship, and though it is possible that this was a kind of half-way store-house for the lead miners of Caldbeck, who were sending their mineral booty to the sea, it is quite as probable that at some time or other a farmer had here his 'strength' or 'strong house,' and that 'rievers' from over the Border had made short work of him, and given his farm-stead to the flames.

We leave the Romans of Caermote, and are not surprised to think a sanatorium hard by was necessary for the cohort of old time, if there was as much water in the ground as there is

to-day within and without the ramparts. Thence we drive by way of Bewaldeth and the inn by the Bassenthwaite cross-roads, to the shores of what Southey called 'westernmost Wythop.' Hardly are we able to get forward, for the cries of those who are with us in the carriage to draw up, that we may gaze at this or that wild-rose bush in all its tender fluttering beauty. But at last we win our goal—Castle How Inn, near Peelwyke; then scrambling up the hill we inspect the four trenches on the side of the hill looking towards Peelwyke, whence of old time gazed out the hardy Britons upon the Roman camp fires blazing at Caermote.

As we gaze we think not only of Roman times, but of the Viking times also; for down below us lies the wyke or harbour where the first Norsemen who ever came up Derwent from the sea ran their boats ashore.

Who, or whence the Norse ancestor of John Peel, who hewed the trees of the woodland at our feet into planks and built his 'Pride of the lake,' we cannot know, but he probably had friends, Ketel and Ormr, and Sweyn, and Honig and Walla, who would from time to time come across the Crosthwaite Vale and step aboard his galley, and sweep with flying sail or gleaming oar along by the woods of Mirehouse

or the shadowy cliffs of Barf to his 'steading' here at Bassenthwaite; and it is more than probable that he and his family 'died into the ground' at Castle How, and there await the glory of the gods and the coming of Odin.

We, as we gaze out south from the How of the Viking, can see plainly to-day the burial ground of other Viking chieftains of the dale on the grey green Latrigg's height; and sadly enough, we think, must they have passed into the dark, if so fair a sun as this shone upon so fair a scene, and the roses and elders were as sweet for them as they are for us to-day.

On now through fragrant briar wood and odorous larch to Keswick, and the ghosts of Britain and Rome and Norway keep pace with our hearts as we go.

ARCTIC SPLENDOURS AT THE ENGLISH LAKES.

THE blizzard brought a greater gift of snow to the hills of the English Lake District than had been remembered since 1859. The storm left behind it a bewitching splendour, and Skiddaw and Helvellyn and Glaramara and Grassmoor never shone more fair. Into clear air above the Yorkshire fells the great sun rose. The heavens flushed above Helvellyn, and presently the steep, angular cleft on Grisedale was filled with blue shadow. Then the light splintered upon Causey Pike and Hindscarth, and Scafell shone like a jewel of flame above the sea of deathly white. Five minutes later the blank white snowfield of Derwentwater was changed into a gleaming floor of dazzling light, and all the encircling hills seemed ivory washed with gold. A lilac veil of haze rose from the

Crosthwaite Valley and drifted up the snow slopes, growing more gossamer-like as it touched the ridges of the hills, and soon the mountains stood as clear as at the dawn against a cloudless sky.

Such blue of heaven touched the cones of Skiddaw as one sees on a clear May morning above the Oberland peaks, and one wondered why it was that people who have no chance of seeing Switzerland did not take the opportunity of realising a Switzerland in miniature when it was close beside their doors. One reads of excursions to the Palace of Varieties at Manchester and Blackpool. How comes it about that no excursions are planned to such a world of varieties, such ivory palaces of winter's garnishing and nature's building, as, after heavy snowfall, may be found in Cumberland?

The frost was still in the shade within 10 degrees of zero; on Chestnut Hill it had been registered in the early morning as being within 4 degrees. People as they went about the roads felt their feet almost ring upon the snow, and children who tumbled into the powder rose and shook the fine dust from their hair and laughed to find they were as dry as a bone. The rooks above were silent

and grave as they sat in solemn conclave on the ash tree at the stable-end and waited for such happy chances as the cook or chicken-man might give them. They were frozen out. Their tools were useless. But the tits were merry enough—blue tit, great tit, and cole tit; how they clung and spun and scooped at the cocoanuts and bones upon their Christmas tree! How the thrush pecked at the suet; how the starling and blackbird gobbled at the softened scraps upon the ground; and how the chaffinch and the robin partook of the crumbs that fell from the rich bird's table, as those crumbs came floating down from suet-lump or cocoanut above!

But we are off for a walk up to that old burial ground of the Viking chieftains from the land of the Frost Giants, which we still call the Ridge of Death—Latrigg of to-day. There, beside the path that leads from the main road, is the golf ground, but golf has been dispossessed by a fitter game for this season, and down the long slide shoot the tobogganers, and up the hill, with glowing faces and in silver clouds of their own breath, the happy people move. As one gazes into the valley another group of people in the

neighbouring hollow may be seen hard at work with brush and curling stones, for the Keswick folk are some of them devotees to the rink, and the noise of the curlers fills the air to-day.

We climb Latrigg, noting how the blizzard has swept some of the snow from Skiddaw's western flank, and let the long yellow grasses and umber-coloured heather once more give their beauty of pencilling to the otherwise snow-white damask of their winter cloak. Thence, after far sight of the snow upon the Scotch hills sacred to the name of Cuthbert and the memory of his mission in Strathclyde, and near sight of the island hermitage, like a black jewel in the snow-field of the lake, which keeps the memory of St. Cuthbert's friend Herebert safe in mind, we descend to the vale.

As we descend we have a friendly crack with a shepherd from the high fells, whose dog has cleverly found and 'crowned' a handful of the Herdwick sheep prisoned by a snowdrift against a wall. How did he do this? 'Naay, I cannot tell tha, but I suppose t' dog nosed 'em, ye kna; dogs is wonderful keen scented.' And had the sheep taken hurt? 'Naay, naay; they were



ARCTIC SPLENDOURS AT THE LAKES.

safe and warm as could be; they hedn't even begun to woo' yan anudder.' Wool one another, what's that? 'Oh, sheep, poor things, when they git snowbound and hev nowt to eat, teks to eatin' woo' off t' backs, to prevent pinin', ye kna.' So saying, the shepherd goes off, to quest for more, up to the land of loneliness and wintry wild, and I go down into the cheery vale.

How blue the snow is; you might have supposed the fields out 'Wythop' way had been washed with ultramarine; but one's eyes are caught back by the beauty of the snowdrifts by the roadside. These snowdrifts are for all the world as if great waves of milk had curled over to breaking, and at the moment had been fixed or changed into crystalline marble. And now the sun is gathering its glory back into itself, and hangs a globe of flame above 'Whinlatter' Pass. Suddenly the light goes out from all the valley meadows. The day star has sunk behind the hills. But still old Skiddaw flashes back the flame, and shepherds, out Newlands way, can see the bastions of Blencathra glow like molten gold.

For us, as we gaze out south, the range of Helvellyn is the miracle of beauty that

holds our eyes. Far off and ghostly for the haze, it lies upon a background of rosy flushing afterglow, and seems to faint into a kind of impalpable phantom of its former strength—becomes no longer solid mountain, but spectral cloud. A light wind blows, and the oak leaves in the hedge tinkle like iron; the farmer calls the horse to get his hay, the wren chirrups or scolds from the wayside bank, and a partridge cries from the near field. Then all is silent and hushed for the coming of the queen. Over the dark pines upon Skiddaw, and above the silver shoulder of the hill, clear-faced and full, the February moon swims up to rule the night. And such a reign of splendour was then begun as I have no words to chronicle. For the heaven above Helvellyn was rosy pink, melting into blue, and the sky above Skiddaw was, or seemed to be, steel azure, and the west beyond the Wythop range was gleaming amber. There, in the midst of that golden sea, shone Venus like a point of silver fire. Sirius rose and scintillated above Helvellyn's ridge, Jupiter looked clear from near the zenith, and Orion girt his starry sword about him in mid-heaven; but it was the Moon who was the queen of all our hearts. It was she who

laid her mystery upon the lakes, the hills, the valleys, white with snow ; she who made one feel that if sunrise and sunsetting had been fair to-day, the moon-rising in a land of Arctic splendour had been fairer still.

WILLIAM PEARSON OF BORDERSIDE.

It is a pleasant thing for a Cumberland Crosthwaite man to have to speak of a man of the Westmoreland Crosthwaite. It is a special pleasure when one realises how Cumberland helped Westmoreland to give us the gentle mind and life of enthusiasm for Truth and Nature which closed here at Borderside, with 'unbroken trust in God,' and 'in hope of immortal life,' on the 16th December, 1856.

I have read no life that seems to have been so genuinely the fruit of enthusiasm for the poet Wordsworth as was the life of William Pearson. He was ten years the junior of the poet, and survived him six years. We may nevertheless look upon him as a contemporary. He was of the same kind of North yeoman stock, and with greater opportunities might have made himself a name

in the annals of literature. As it is, like Elihu Robinson of Egglesfield, like Wilkinson of Yanwath, like the late Wilson Robinson of Winfell, Lorton, Pearson's name was not known far beyond his native valley, but of him, as of the others named, it is truth to say that he was a living monument of what 'the soul of Nature,' if it be received into the heart of man, can do to elevate, to strengthen and refine. Of none other in his simple estatesman rank that I have read of can it be more truly said, that from :

' . . . Nature and her overflowing soul
He had received so much, that all his thoughts
Were steeped in feeling.'

Wordsworth once wrote that 'Nature never did betray the heart that loved her'; William Pearson proved by all he said and did that Wordsworth spoke the truth. Wordsworth spoke felicitously of the

'Harvest of a quiet eye
That sleeps and broods on its own heart.'

William Pearson gathered that harvest to the full, ere he too, like a shock of corn, was in a full time garnered. Wordsworth declared that

'Who feels contempt for any living thing
Hath faculties that he hath never used,'

and William Pearson put that assertion to good proof. Few men in his day and station in this country went down to the grave with larger heart, of wider sympathy and more love for all created things.

William Pearson was born at the Yews in the Winster Vale on the 9th of October, 1780. His father, who died at the age of 81 in the year 1840, was long remembered as a quiet, studious farmer, who would ever read a book at his meals, and made a practice of going afield at nights to gaze upon the heavens. The stars in their courses helped him to reverence and to thought. William's mother—a Little from the Borderland—survived her husband and died at the age of 88 in 1842. While she span at her flax-wheel she used to delight her little son William with folklore stories and fairy tales, but she was chiefly remembered in the village for her bright activity and energy to the last. Many a time, when she was between seventy and eighty years old, on market day morning, though the horse stood saddled at the door, the old lady would say, 'Nay, hang it, I'll never fash wid it,' and would set off on foot to Kendal, with her butter basket containing twenty to thirty pounds of butter, a distance

of six miles and a half, and after 'standing the market' and shopping, would walk home again with her purchases.

As a youngster, William's education was left to the wild beauty of his native vale. If ever there was a boy of whom Nature might have said :

'Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The *Boy*, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain,'

it was the boy who went afield with his father as soon as he could toddle, and who in Nature's kindly school got to know by heart and eye the hills and scars of the neighbourhood, the tarns and moorlands, the trotting brooks, the rivers running to the sea, the great estuary and marsh, with all their bird and beast and flower life. He never forgot his first sight of Windermere and Morecambe Bay, nor his first journey up Troutbeck over the Kirkstone Pass; and no sooner had he left home for work elsewhere than he felt that there was only one place on this earth where life was worth living and that was the Winster Vale.

It is true that he went to the Crosthwaite school and proved himself early to be a master of figures. The author who fascinated him then was Defoe. *The Memoirs of a Cavalier* and *Robinson Crusoe* were his teachers. From Crosthwaite school he went to Underbarrow and distinguished himself there chiefly for having the pluck to stand up to the big bully and thrash him in defence of the oppressed youngster. He became out of school times an expert and ardent follower of Isaac Walton. Years after, he wrote an appreciative paper which is extant on Walton and Cotton's *Complete Angler*, which he begins with the sentence, 'Among our most favourite books is *The Complete Angler* of Isaac Walton.' The boys of Underbarrow noticed that he hugged his garret where the owls built, and was often deep in old romances of *Amadis de Gaul* and *Roncesvalles* when others were out and away up the fells. But in the holidays he followed bark-peeling, not so much as that thus he might earn something that would pay for his schooling, as because in the months of May and June when the bark-peelers went to their fragrant task in the woods, there was a fine chance of becoming acquainted with the life-history

of many of our feathered visitors that were nesting at that time. In autumn his delight was to be after the woodcocks, and great was his joy,

‘With store of springes o’er his shoulder hung,
To range the open heights where woodcocks run
Along the smooth green turf. Through half the night,
Scudding away from snare to snare, he plied
That anxious visitation.’

In his copy of Wordsworth’s *Prelude*, the marker, at his death, was found placed at this passage, and he never tired of telling the story of his woodcock adventures.

His first work in life was to act as teacher in the Winster village school; he went thence to be tutor to the four children of a widow body at Cartmel Fell, but at the end of the year gave up teaching to take the place of a grocer’s assistant at Kendal.

He was only there a year, but it was an eventful one in William Pearson’s life. He made the acquaintance of Benjamin Gough, the blind botanist, and it is possible that he was led by him into enquiry not only into the wonders of plant life, but of the life of that most delicate of all plants, the religious faith of the human soul. It is certain that during this year William Pearson’s chief

study was the study of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Church Doctrine, and the end of it was that he reasoned and read himself out of Episcopalianism into Unitarianism, as his father had in the past done before him. He found rest to his young soul in the thought of the great Fatherhood of God, and worshipped in the old Presbyterian Meeting House, where sometimes in after years Wordsworth also worshipped, and near by which lie the ashes of the James Patrick of Kendal, who was the original of the Wanderer in *The Prelude*. It may be fancy, but I like to think that it was in that chapel that the young lad first saw the man whose writings did more for him all through life than any other—I mean William Wordsworth.

From Kendal, William went, as was the wont of many a Kendal apprentice, to a grocer's shop in London, and at the end of three months he returned to the Winster Vale, broken in health from the stifle of London air, and the fact that he had no better resting place after long days of work in a city store than a shake-down underneath the counter. He was now in his twenty-third year. The 'poddish' and fresh air of the

Yews set him 'agate' again, and he determined to try Manchester life, and on the 16th March, 1803, he set out for that metropolis of the North. He obtained a situation on the next day after his arrival as clerk in the bank of James Fox & Company, in King Street, and for the next seventeen years he endured

'The fierce confederate storm
Of sorrow barricadoed evermore
Within the walls of cities.'

How simple and frugal his life was there, we may gather from the fact that out of his first year's stipend of £75 he sent back a deposit to one of the Kendal banks. He was not very happy. He wanted friends of his age 'who united,' as he tells us, 'those first of blessings, virtue and knowledge,' and they were not. 'Indeed, sir,' he writes to James Watson of Kendal, 'I think Manchester, in proportion to its population, very deficient in men of cultivated understanding. Immersed in business, or carried down the stream of dissipation, slaves to "Mammon" and to "Bacchus," they have seldom time for the rational amusement of reading or for the calm pleasure of reflection.'

This seems somewhat priggish, but it was the real and earnest William Pearson who spoke. Sociable as he was, fond of seeing a good play, his chief delight, if he was not out in the fields, was a book that would set him thinking or a poem that would touch his imagination, and Pearson was old beyond his years. He joined the Didactical Society, the Mosley Street Library, subscribed to the News Room and made one or two friends for life.

There in most uncongenial surroundings for seventeen years he stuck to 'the drudgery at the desk's dead wood' with one thought, that a time would arrive when he could come back to his native vale, and live a student's and a naturalist's life in simple competence. As a matter of fact his health broke down after five years of Manchester smoke, and he had to come back in 1808 to the Yews in his native vale for country air and restoration.

He was at this time nothing if not a keen sportsman, and he was, if one may judge from a letter he sent at this time to a Kendal paper, vexed at heart by the vigorous application of the game laws as enforced by the worthies of the local bench. Three young men, who, with nothing but a knob-stick, could run down

a hare, had been caught hunting on Cartmel Fell. 'We must pity the Robinsons,' he says, 'young men who can run down a hare, an animal that often escapes the fleetest greyhound, who pursued their sport without fear in the open day, and so generously, that they left a hare with the farmer on whose ground they happened to take it. These fine young men have been made to pay £3 13s. 6d. for their sport. The age of chivalry is indeed gone. The ancient Greeks would have crowned them with laurel, but this is the age of taxation and little men. We are fallen on evil days; we only wish the surveyor and commissioner had heard them at their joyous sport, and had heard their shouts, as we did, which made the old mountains ring again even to Gummershow, to be echoed back from the far-off Coniston Fells.'

It was during his Manchester residence that he became a student of William Wordsworth. It was not fashionable then to care for Wordsworth's poetry, but William Pearson was never without the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1805, or his copy of *Poems by William Wordsworth*, of 1807. The young bank clerk, who was often heard muttering, 'I will lift mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh aid,' felt in these

poems 'all the beauty of a common dawn.' He knew that Wordsworth walked on the shining uplands of a noble aspiration, and was the apostle, in a time 'that touched monied worldlings with dismay,' of the simpler life of honest poverty and high endeavour. He felt that in Wordsworth he could find that sympathy with all things, that

'Look to the Uncreated with a countenance
Of admiration and an eye of love.'

He knew that Wordsworth had realised the power of Nature to chasten and subdue

'and intertwine
The passions that build up our human soul
Not with the mean and vulgar works of man
But with high objects and enduring things.'

He also knew how Wordsworth taught men the secret of the gentle heart,

'Never to blend its pleasure or its pride,
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.'

It was this knowledge that soon made him love rather to watch a wild bird than shoot it. One is not surprised therefore to find him constantly referring to Wordsworth's writings, and yet to feel him so eminent as a man that years after, though communing in spirit with

him day by day, he could not summon courage to go up the path to Rydal Mount, and abashed at his own boldness for venturing to call, came away from the door of the Rydal poet, without seeing his hero, like a thing ashamed.

It was owing to mutual love and admiration for Wordsworth's poetry that he found in a poor Gorton silk-weaver, Thomas Smith by name, so congenial a companion. The last six years of Pearson's life at Manchester can chiefly be known from the letters that passed between these two friends, which towards the end seem almost to degenerate into a series of begging letters from a poor weaver out of work and 'thrice dispirited.' But this at any rate is seen in their correspondence, that even in abject poverty high thinking is possible, and Wordsworth's poems seem to be medicine for the mind ; while on the other hand there is always the ready and generous response of the yeoman of Winster Vale, and such delicacy in act of gift as makes one feel how finely strung, how nobly sensitive was the mind of the benefactor.

Pearson sends Thomas Smith a copy of *The Excursion*. 'Your tidings about Wordsworth,' says the poor weaver, under date of April 15,

1821, 'I will not call him Mr., he is too great for that, were good tidings indeed ; his *Excursion* I have been longing for ever since it was first published, but the price has been an unsurmountable obstacle to a weaver.'

The two friends unbosom their hearts to one another in these letters, and there is seen something of the deep religious side of Pearson's character in some of them. 'I cannot,' he writes to Smith in 1831, 'conclude without a word about what you write of your being unhappy. Read your Bible. Trust in that Good Being who gave you your existence. Consider the many in your situation who from ignorance and want of education have not the arguments of hope that you have ; . . . only the wicked need be unhappy ; at anyrate do not despair.' And again in 1838, 'I wish I could console you under your troubles. Be thankful you have not a guilty conscience—the greatest of evils. Read your Bible, read Wordsworth, Shakespeare and Milton. Do you go to worship, public, I mean? You have a chapel at the foot of your hill, join yourself to them.'

When Smith lay dying, Pearson wrote a letter full of tender sympathy. 'So long as reason and memory remain, I shall never forget

the many delightful hours we have passed together, whether in reading some favourite poet or rambling among the beautiful scenes of Nature.' 'I believe,' he added, 'that seldom have two persons come together more in sympathy than we two, and I have often felt that my separation from you was one of my greatest losses in leaving your part of the country.'

Those rambles he mentions were walking tours he took in 1817 through Derbyshire, and in 1818 in the Craven country of Yorkshire. He kept journals, and full of delightful observation of men and things they are, redolent of real joy in sunshine and cloud. He writes, 'We walked forward on this delightful morning with vigorous steps. The lark was our constant companion, cheering us overhead with her song, the fresh air of the mountains bathed our cheeks, there was freedom from care and the feeling of liberty

'When the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world
Hung not upon the beatings of our hearts.'

'We felt something,' he adds, 'of

"That blessed mood
In which the burden of the mystery,

In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened : that serene and blessed mood
In which the affections gently lead us on.”’

At the end of his Derbyshire journal he says that ‘the remembrance of those happy days in Derbyshire will lie in the landscape of his memory, like spots of stationary sunshine; they will be to him and his friend as wells of pure water amid desert sands to which their souls may fly for refreshment hereafter in hours of weariness amid the din of towns and cities and the many shapes of joyless delight.’

Did ever city man take back to city roar and barrenness more quiet and more profit from a country ramble?

In his last letter to Thomas Smith, he spoke of having left the Manchester neighbourhood. In the autumn of 1820 he gave up his work in the Manchester Bank. He never could think of his native vale without a sense of heartsickness; his work was irksome and city life hateful. In his poem to the river Winster dated 1821, he writes :

‘And in the heavy time of after life,
When buried in the midst of toil and strife
In trading towns, if intermission sweet
I sought from my dull toil, my fancy fleet

Was straight amid thy vernal meads and flowers,
 Thy hanging fields, wild woods, and leafy bowers.
 Nor could I think of beauty on this earth,
 But still 'twas seen with thee—as if thy birth
 And mine had been together. Now at ease
 And free to wander whereso'er I please,
 What charms I find along thy simple stream,
 Beloved Winster !'

It is no wonder that a yeoman farmer's son who could thus write, should have felt irresistibly drawn from exile in Manchester to his native vale, and we find him back at the Yews, in correspondence, now with the editor of a county paper, now with Miss Wordsworth, now writing a ballad or a poem, now a natural history note, now wandering off down Duddon Vale, and through the Lake District, and now keenly interested in a little dilapidated estate in the Crosthwaite township called sometimes Borderside, sometimes Balderside, or perhaps more accurately in Viking phrase, Bauta-side, and determining to go into the farming line.

He became purchaser of the Borderside estate in 1822; at once he determined to let it for five years, and gave his whole time and the rent to boot, to the improvement of it.

In the summer of the same year that he became an estatesman, he planned a tour into Scotland. Wordsworth wrote him a full and

particular itinerary, and William Pearson followed the footsteps of the bard, and really made the same journey as Wordsworth's first excursion to Scotland.

There is an interesting note of the peasants recollection of Burns in Ayrshire, and of the Sabbath manners of certain of the Auchterarder folk, but the journal otherwise is a little tiresome.

The next ten years were spent in the not very profitable work of mending the fences and outbuildings of Borderside, and then of attempting to make its crops pay the rent and leave something over. But in 1841 he 'declined' farming, not without the secret joy of getting back to his mother's house at the Yews, where all his books were stored, and where the *Encyclopædia*, just bound, was awaiting him.

He had not been idle, he had made the Corn Laws a study, and had concluded that they were unjust, cruel, and impolitic. He had done what he could to get the Kendal folk to abolish the old system of selling fruit by baskets, or paniers containing sixteen quarts, and had introduced the better system of selling by weight.

In the spring of 1842 his mother died, and

now, at the age of sixty-two, William Pearson felt free to marry. He married Ann Greenhow of Heversham in May.

He was by instinct a tiller of the ground ; he used to say that 'no one felt more dependence upon God than the farmer in his fields.' He turned his attention to fruit culture, planted a large orchard with 300 trees and two lesser ones, and felt that he had not lived in vain. It was during this period that he began making notes of the habits of the bird and beast life round about him. Some observations on the habits of the hedgehog which he sent in 1836 to Mr. Wordsworth were sent by the poet to the members of the Kendal Natural History Society, of which Pearson had been a member almost from the first.

The result of this communication evoked, so Cornelius Nicholson, the then secretary, tells us, so much enthusiasm, that a class was determined on for mutual instruction in the habits and distinctive faculties of birds and beasts. It was Pearson's habit to attend the monthly discussion meeting of this Society, and he thought nothing of setting off after an early tea and walking in nearly seven miles to Kendal and walking back by starlight after the lecture.

It was to this part of his life between the years 1825 and 1833 that belong the glimpses of his intimacy with the Rydal Mount family, as shown by the letters, chiefly from Dorothy Wordsworth, that have been preserved to us. It is clear that William Pearson was a most welcome guest at Rydal. Excursions up Helvellyn are planned with the Wordsworths, and natural history notes are exchanged. The letters are chiefly interesting as giving us hints of the simplicity of the life there, and are often full of thanks to him for a panier of apples, or a leash of partridges, they contain a request for straw for the stables, they seek his advice in purchase of a pony, they send requisition for more potatoes and the like. William Pearson was looked upon as the henchman who could be best trusted to supply the Rydal Mount with farm produce, and it is clear that to do the bidding of the bard and be steward of his stable economics was a real pleasure to him.

He also sent to Dorothy Wordsworth's sick-room just those delightful little *nature* anecdotes which cheered her in her retirement. He admired and honoured the poet's sister. 'Never,' says he in one of his letters to Smith in 1832, 'have I known a more

amiable woman. Her understanding and judgment are of the highest order. I have heard Mr. Wordsworth say that he had been more indebted to her judgment than to that of any other person.'

The correspondence gives little facts and dates of household matters that are interesting to students of the poet's life at Rydal. For example, we learn on May 5, 1830, that on the next day will be finished the new terrace, to the poet's satisfaction; we learn also of Wordsworth's constant trouble from 1833 and onward by reason of the inflammation of his eyes. We hear incidentally how poor a horseman, but how good a walker the poet is, and the simplicities and hospitalities of Rydal Mount are brought before us.

But it was not only as steward of the farm and orchard that Pearson was so truly honoured by the Wordsworths. It was because the poet felt that in him he had a real lover of his art, and a real understander of his poetry and his philosophy. One is not surprised to find that Wordsworth thanked him on the occasion when, in the Kendal paper, the worthy yeoman took up pen in defence of the poet. And those who years after honoured the dead poet's memory—his

personal friends, Dr. Davy and others—were grateful to William Pearson when, in 1854, he championed, in a letter full of feeling and knowledge, the Protestantism of the bard, which had been called in question by a lecturer of the Protestant Alliance in Kendal, who had described Wordsworth's poetry as being 'one of the principal means of the revival of priestly domination in the Church of England.'

It is very touching to see how really he valued the friendship of the poet he so well understood and so honoured. 'What claim have I,' he wrote to Dorothy Wordsworth, 'on the notice of a man like your brother? My chief obligations to him for conferring on me his society and hospitable notice I hope I shall feel to the latest hours of my life.' Writing to Wordsworth from Bordside under date 1849, he says, 'I felt very grateful for your letter. On reading the first few lines I was sorry to think how much Mrs. Wordsworth's handwriting had changed, but when I found it was indeed your own hand the tears came into my eyes. I shall preserve this kind memorial and shall not part with it till I part with everything in life.' These were the words of a real hero-worshipper, and he had cause for hero-worship.

What Wordsworth's poetry did to inspire and keep pure and true and serene the heart of William Pearson, it will still do for men of humble country life in the years that are to be. We need to-day more of soul among our farmer folk, we want a *vade mecum* for the tiller of the soil that shall lift his soul to Heaven. I cannot doubt that if men would study Wordsworth and receive his 'heart into their own,' there would be dignity and happiness added to many a daleside home.

To return to William Pearson. He found the farm life on the whole a happy one. He would not have given it up had he not determined to marry. His orchards prospered, and his hay grass was generally well got. His frugal ways ensured him competency, and all day and every day he was learning more of Nature's secrets, more of the pleasant ways of birds and beasts about him. He was making observations, too, on the changes that had come over the vale of Lythe and the neighbouring fells and common lands, since the packhorse had ceased to be, and the common enclosures and the larch planters had come in.

But his ears were open also to the quaint sayings and superstitions, and his eyes were on the quaint ways and customs of the dalesmen

amongst whom he dwelt and moved, and these observations bore good fruit in the paper written in 1841, the year before his marriage, for the Kendal Natural History Society, entitled 'A Sketch of some of the Existing and Recent Superstitions of Westmoreland.'

It was doubtless a source of gratification to William Pearson that the son of the poet should be the officiating minister in Bowness Church the day he led his wife to the altar, in May of 1842. And he must needs have been pleased on his return to Low House after a wedding jaunt through the lakes, to find that Hartley Coleridge, who had called to congratulate him on his marriage, left behind him an impromptu sonnet. It had, as most of Hartley's sonnets have, a little touch of description of the life both of himself and of his friend, the gentle estatesman :

'A little man of solitary life
And half an idiot too—more helpless still—
Can wish all joy to thee and to thy wife ;
Thy love must be as constant as thy will.
My gentle friend, how happy mayst thou be !
Thou hast a wife to pray—and pray with thee.'

During the coming June of 1842 Pearson took his wife to the Continent. He had long

planned this trip ; writing to his friend Thomas Smith in April of 1841, to tell him of his intended venture on 'that variety of untried being,' marriage, he says that Mr. Wordsworth has advised him to make a Swiss and Italian tour before age renders him unfit for foot-travel, and adds that his future wife 'is an excellent walker, and is quite willing to share the fatigue, and he is sure she will share the pleasure.' There is a note of simplicity in this intention to see the Swiss and Italian lakes afoot—the bridegroom now more than three score years, but a 'young heart travels many a mile,' and William Pearson's heart was young to the last.

Wordsworth supplied him with an itinerary which he faithfully followed. After the tour they stayed on until the spring at Versoix, near Geneva, and his journal shows that he was busy making naturalist notes all the while. There is a touching note in his journal of his delight on getting back to his Westmoreland home. The blue mountains and the well-known fells, and the ivy-covered cottage of Low House, and the happy greetings from beloved friends. These deeply moved him.

There was no suitable house for the happy couple in Crosthwaite, and after staying at

Low House for the winter, he went into lodgings at High Crag. Lodgings were not William Pearson's ideal of home life, and though he was a man of sixty-seven he determined in 1847 to build a house on his own estate.

It was a glad day for him when, as he tells us, on the last day of July, 1848, he crept into the bosom of his own cheerful cot 'with measureless content,' a cottage 'unclothed by rough-cast,' as he told Wordsworth, 'but exhibiting a goodly row of chimneys with pretty round tops on square pedestals, the only specimens yet in Crosthwaite of the revived good old fashion.'

We have a poet's description of this Border-side home from the pen of Perceval Graves, who, writing from Dovenest in 1862, thus describes it :

'Red roses flush its native stone,
The grassy slope, the rocky mount
Are gay with flowers,—a shadowy fount
Murmurs with cool delicious tone.
Beneath, an orchard far and wide
Its blossom on its front displays;
Across the valley friendly rays
From neighbour houses hail Borderside.'

Here for the next eight years dwelt the refined and thoughtful yeoman, reading such

books as he felt he could afford to buy, such books as he could borrow from Kendal, or were lent him by Coleridge or Perceval Graves or Wordsworth; corresponding with such naturalists as Waterton and Gough, such students as Perceval Graves and Dr. Davy, keeping up constant communion with the friends at Rydal Mount; getting hold of the best that could be had of the scientific treatises of the day; dipping here and there into theologic problems; studying his Shakespeare and his Milton, enjoying his Carlyle, his Burns, and his Scott, his Reed's *English Literature*, impressing, when he met him, such a man as Sir William Hamilton, examining the theories of Agazziz and Brewster as to moraine and glacier action, comparing his own natural history observations with those of Waterton and White of Selborne; and from time to time, when he had returned from some ride on 'Nep' or 'Camel,' his favourite ponies, sitting down to chronicle the beauty of the day's outing, or the wild life of bird and beast he had observed. Amongst the latter must be noted his papers on the partridge and the squirrel, in 1846; on the woodgrouse, that 'new bird' which appears to have come to Colthouse first in the autumn of 1845 (this paper was

written in 1850), and again on the hagworm, 1852; 'Notes on Characters and Habits of Domestic Animals, 1854'; and 'A few Recent Notices in Natural History, 1855.'

All Pearson's prose has a dignity and simplicity and directness that makes one realise he had been a reader of the masters of English style, but it makes one feel also that he is a poet at heart, as he writes his prose. Take for example his account of the glede or kite—alas! long vanished from our land, though nesting at the ferry as late as the beginning of last century;—'I have seen,' says he, 'the glede and his beautiful flight, no words of mine can adequately describe it. It was on a windy day in autumn or winter that he generally made his appearance. Imagine a bird measuring five feet between the tips of his wings. To glide along it required apparently no mechanical effort, no fluttering of the wings, not the tremor of a feather. It was not flying but sailing on the bosom of the air, as if by an effort of the will, such ease, such grace, such dignity.'

The evenings at Borderside were spent in reading. A mellow musical voice with much feeling in it, would render a passage from some favourite poet, and as often as not the

old man's voice would falter and he would say, 'I cannot go on,' and with tears rolling down his cheeks he would put the book down. Perceval Graves, his great friend of the later years, would oftentimes come over for high discourse and heart communion from Dovenest to Borderside. He described those pleasant visits thus :

'And when our cheerful meal was o'er,
A meal which friendship seemed to bless
And elegance and homeliness
With charm we scarce had known before.

How swiftly flew the hours away,
As thought and feeling deeply stored
By mind and heart all forth were poured
In loving faith and lively play!'

The summer of 1856 was memorable for a waterspout that fell in hay-time on the 8th of August, upon Carnigill, near Borrow Bridge ; we who travel by the L.N.W.R. from Tebay to the south can still see the wounds upon the mountain side the fury of the torrent made. The phenomenon was minutely described by the old meteorologist in a letter to Mr. Davy. It was the last August he would see.

The long walks over fell and moor gave way to pony-back, and pony-back gave way

to a carriage. It was clear to all who knew that delicately chiselled face and noble brow of the yeoman poet and naturalist, that with all his mental powers clear and his eye undimmed, his natural strength was abating. In the spring of 1856 the Winster folk noticed that though he visited, as was his wont, all the orchards for miles round, he visited them in his gig, and men knew by his constant cough that his old enemy, bronchitis, was pressing him sore. But every sunny day found him sitting with his book under the shadow of the famous ash tree at Borderside, and still at night time, if the stars were clear, they saw a tall figure wrapped in a plaid, and stick in hand, pacing slowly the garden path, before the door was shut and lights went out.

As for his own light, that went out, painlessly almost as it seemed, on December 16th. A day or two before, he had gone to the window of his sick room, and said, 'In another month the snowdrops will be here.' The snowdrops came, but alas! for eyes of others almost too dim for tears to see them. On the day of his death, or more properly, his falling on sleep, the sunset brightened in the west, and the dying man with the instinct of an observer keen to the last, turned his

face to the window to see the glory grow. Then he sighed and passed to other glory beyond all sunsetting.

Of his work that remains, little need be said. It is always thoughtful, accurate of observation, pure in style, refined in diction, and delicate in poetic appreciation. One much regrets that he who had in 1808 espoused the 'Terza Rima' should have so soon quitted the sonnet's scanty plot of ground and left so few examples of his work. Amongst the miscellaneous papers and letters on natural history that remain are three which we of this county cannot be too thankful for. One is a paper 'On certain changes that have taken place of late years in a part of the Lake District,' with its notes of 'pack-horse-routes,' 'implements of primitive husbandry,' 'the introduction of larch planting,' 'commons enclosure,' and with its interesting account of the ancient Lythe Marsh.

Another is a paper in form of six letters to Thomas Gough containing 'notes on a few subjects in the natural history of Crosthwaite and Lythe, and the valley of Winster.' He prefaced this series of letters with an apparent quotation which really was his own saying and which, as a lover of St. Francis and of

all his true followers, I dare to repeat.—
‘These lonely denizens of the earth, our fellow pilgrims on the journey of life, have their appointed tasks as we have, set out by the great Creator.’ There spoke the heart of the wise old Winster estatesman, who long had known the bond of love that binds the travailing creation into one, who as he moved among his brother birds and flowers, and felt the glory of his brother sun, or of his sister the homeside fire, also then

‘With bliss ineffable
Could feel the sentiment of Being spread
O’er all that moves and all that seemeth still
O’er all that leaps and runs and shouts and sings
Or beats the gladsome air, or all that glides
Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself
And mighty depth of waters.’

The last two papers to be mentioned are ‘The Sketches of some of the existing and recent Superstitions of Westmoreland’: most valuable these are, as written just in the nick of time. The two generations that have passed since he collected his material and penned his notes, have ceased to hand on the traditional sayings and become too matter of fact to be ‘boddereid wid sic things as Charms or Boggles or Dobbies or Barguests or Wisemen or Witches.’

There is no one in the county of Westmoreland to-day who would care to take their children when plagued with the kink-cough up to Cartmel-fell, on chance of clipping a hair from the cross on an ass's back and then tying it round the bairn's neck as a sovereign remedy for the troublesome whoop.

But if it had not been for William Pearson I doubt if we should have known that the Winster dalesfolk, notwithstanding that the Cross was set here in the clearing so many centuries ago, were actually fire-worshippers and carrying on the rites of Baal with their Beltane-fires as late as the year of Our Lord 1840. Pearson tells us he talked with a farmer who had actually been present at the sacrifice by fire of a calf in this neighbourhood, and that there were two places within the memory of men then living, Fell Side in Crosthwaite and Hodge Hill on Cartmel-fell, where, to prevent the death of calves after birth, large fires were kindled in the open air near to the farm house and a living calf laid upon them and burnt to death.

As for the reality of this superstitious relic of sun-worship, in the year 1840, William Pearson actually witnessed it here in Crosthwaite, and, with a quotation from his paper

upon this point, I will close this notice of his life and work :

‘The Need Fire has again made its appearance. There is at present a rumour of a dreadful epidemic among cattle, which has shown itself in different places in this part of our country, to which it has been coming slowly up from the South, where it prevailed last summer. On Sunday afternoon, the 15th of last November, returning from Kendal by way of Brigsteer, when I reached the brow of the hill that overlooks that pleasant village, and from whence there is a glorious prospect, I was somewhat surprised to see, in Crosthwaite, two or three large masses of white smoke “rising up like the smoke of a furnace.” I thought it was lime-burning, from some kilns that are not usually occupied. But when I reached Crosthwaite, I found myself in the immediate neighbourhood of one of these “smokes,” which was rising very thickly below the Church Tower. I enquired of a young woman standing in the road what was the meaning of all this smoke. “Oh,” said she, “it is the Need Fire.” Well, thought I, much as I have heard of it, I have never seen the Need Fire. I will not miss this opportunity of having ocular evidence of all its

mysteries. On reaching the spot, I found the fire burning in the narrow lane called Kirk Lane, within about twenty yards of the Kirk Tower, and about half a dozen cattle huddled together and kept close to the fire, and amongst the smoke, by a number of men and boys standing on each side of them, in that narrow lane. Sometimes they drove them through the fire, and such was the thickness of the smoke that I could scarcely perceive the actors in this strange ceremony—men and cattle. “So,” said I, “you are giving them a smoke.” “Yes,” replied the owner of the cows, “we wish to be like our neighbours.” “But have you got the real Need Fire?” “Yes, we believe so, it came down Crook yesterday.” Now I had heard that it had been at Low Levens a few days before, so that this superstitious fire was evidently moving about in all directions through the length and breadth of the land: nor do they appear to give it any rest, even on Sundays!’

JOSEPH HAWELL, A SKIDDAW SHEPHERD.

DID you know Joseph Hawell of Lonscale?

Nearly everybody within sight of Skiddaw did, and knew him to honour him and to speak well of him.

Not a ram-show nor a Herdwick prize show, not a clipping feast nor shepherd's meeting, but 'kenned' Joseph Hawell; and of later years most of the 'Yellow' or Conservative meetings in the district had seen his manly form and heard his manly words in what he used to call 'the national cause.' For Joseph Hawell was a Conservative and a Unionist; 'thoro'-bred' he used to say, for his father and his mother had felt as he did in matters political, and he thought 'they had mixed a laal bit yaller wid his poddish' when he was a boy. At any rate he would have liked well enough to have branded his fleecy

Skiddaw darlings with the words 'For King and Country,' and used a yellow 'dip' if such had been in existence.

I knew his old father—him of Longlands in Uldale—later of Lonscale; and a better informed man, a man, that is, better read in the news of the day, was hardly to be found in the farm-houses round Keswick. So like Dean Stanley of Westminster he was in face that I would introduce him to my friends as 'the Dean,' and by his side, as he 'cracked' on the things of state, sat usually one of the sweetest-faced, gentlest-natured of women, his good wife, whose maiden name was Jane Walker, of Stockdale. They had married in the 'fifties' of last century, and she had borne him five children—John, Jane (who died in girlhood), Robert, Joseph, and Ann.

Joseph was a Christmas present to the old oak cradle at Longlands Farm, for he was born on the 24th December, 1854; and he grew up, with John and Robert, to be as passionately fond of sheep as his father. Never a boy for books much at school, he still as a youngster was ever fond of helping on the Fell, and of training the shepherd's dogs; and rare training he had himself.

His father had, from a present of ten gimmer lambs, given him by his father when he was a young man, reared up quite a fine race of the blackfaced Herdwicks, and was, by the time the lads could bear him company, flockmaster of 500 sheep on Frozen Fell and Wylie Ghyll, and of 300 in the Forest, as it is called—the great heathery waste in the basin at the back of Skiddaw.

Joseph grew up strong and lusty as 'a shepherd should grow, and together with his brothers, took to wrestling as all shepherds in Cumberland ought to do; but the lads, as they grew up, became so fond of the sheep and so devoted to their father, that as soon as he, seeing that they were likely to be drawn into the ring, and to lose some of their interest in the Herdwick sheep, begged them to give up the wrestling, they gave it up; and henceforth these brothers' one aim in life seemed to be how they could most help their father to improve the Herdwick breed, and maintain his honour as a shepherd.

In 1869 the family migrated from Uldale to the secluded farm on Col. Watson's estate, between Lonscale and Saddleback; and what success the Hawells, father and sons, obtained

as breeders of pure Herdwicks can be seen by any who will call to-day at the Farm, and ask to be shown the prizes and cards that literally cover the walls from floor to ceiling.

The old man, who had struggled with storm on Skiddaw through his laborious life, failed in health, suffered as shepherds often do from terrible rheumatism, and was troubled with asthma. At last he felt obliged to leave the ingle-nook and take to his bed upstairs; but his love of the shepherd's life was still so strong upon him that a few days before he died he insisted on seeing one of the prize Herdwick rams, and the sons had a tough job to get it to 'clim' the 'stee' and stand in the presence of the dying man. The old man felt death coming upon him shortly after, but he told those who watched they need not trouble to fetch the doctor, as he knew his hour had come, and he was ready to 'gang' home.

I wrote this sonnet at the time of his death :

The sheep are bleating in the fell-side field,
The kine call sadly from the homestead near,
But thou art far away, thou dost not hear.
A greater Shepherd, for thy feet, doth wield

The rod that thro' the vale of death can yield
Sole comfort. Round thy bed and round thy bier
The trophies of thy hand in letters clear,
Speak; but we speak not: grief our lips has sealed.

Farewell, where Glenderaterra pours apace
Rich music from her thousand upland springs!
Thy name, old friend, the Lonscale streamlet sings;
King-Shepherd thou of Skiddaw's fleecy race;
And still in memory we behold thy face,
Lined by laborious morns and evenings.

And on the headstone in Greystoke church-
yard, that records Edward Hawell's burial,
may be seen the following lines:

Here lies a simple shepherd, one who strove
To leave behind a fairer, fuller flock;
Lead him, Great Master Shepherd, in thy love,
To wells of life from the Eternal Rock!

Before he died he had the comfort of seeing Joseph wedded to as good a daughter-in-law as ever lived. It was but in keeping with the whole life of the household that Joseph should have first met Margaret Roberts at the Gillbanks' clipping. The love for all time that first began at the shearing, went on smoothly till that other Master of the Shears, one men call Death, cut so cruelly the knot that Love in this life had tied. Married in 1886, Joseph was happy as man could be; he

was blessed with a son John, and a daughter Sarah Jane.

With plenty of work on the Fells by day for himself, his brother, and his men to do, he yet found time to study at night. He took to politics as his father before him had taken to them, and, having gained confidence in public speaking, he worked hard at his speeches and the preparing of them.

Of books he had not many but good; and he specially delighted in biographies and history. He never tired of reading of the *Spacious Times of Great Elizabeth*, the *History of Wellington's Wars*, or of *Nelson's Exploits*; and when the Royal Jubilee and Armada Tercentenary came round, no stronger hand or more willing heart was found in the whole neighbourhood to build up the huge bonfire stack on Skiddaw top than Joseph Hawell's. As I write I can see him, the perspiration streaming down his honest face, building away with the peats, and handing up the paraffin, bucket by bucket; and hoping, as he told us then, there was not a man in canny Cumberland but would feel the fiery glow of a patriot's heart that night.

But he will never help us on Skiddaw top more; and never, alas, shall we go to the

shepherds' meeting in Wylie Ghyll with him again, or see him at the ram fair, or hear him at a 'yaller' speech day, or sit with him at his own fireside and 'crack' on about the Herdwicks.

It is thought that influenza laid its deadly hand upon him early in the year 1891, and simultaneously he had some ailment of the gums—toothache he called it. It must have been something more serious; he went off to Keswick to see the doctor: the doctor lanced the gum, but the wound took bad ways, and within a day or so the strong man was in bed, weak and delirious.

He wished to be up and after the sheep. Must be about his father's business! And, on a cold Spring day, Friday, February 20th, an angel came to the lonely farmstead of Lonscale, to bid the brave man's spirit fare the way that all who really wish to do that Heavenly Father's business must go uncomplainingly. And still Joseph Hawell's heart was where it had ever been—at home in England. He thought that some strange hands were taking him away by force to another land, and the last words that he spoke were these:

'No! if I must die, I will at least die an

Englishman on English ground!’ And so he died.

The strong hand of one stronger than man had taken him; and in a few days more, on February 23rd, hands tender and strong, the hands of an affectionate brother and true friends, bore the body of a shepherd, dead in his prime—for he was but 36 years old—down through the cow-pasture and over the gurgling Glenderaterra, and so through the silent Brundholme woods above the wailing Greta away to its rest in English earth beneath the shadow of the old church of St. Kentigern, in the Cros-thwaite valley, within sight of that hornéd hill of Skiddaw he had loved so well. The people of Keswick begged that his body might be carried through their sorrowful town that opportunity might be given of showing sympathy and respect. And many a stalwart yeoman came to the Homegoing. Little they said, but they felt much as they moved in their dark market-carts toward the burial.

‘Eh, but what! it’s a terrible loss for us all!’ ‘The best man amang us gone.’ ‘We all mun ga when t’ time comes, but it’s hard bearing is this.’ ‘Niver a handier man wi’

t' sheep i' t' whoale forest.' 'Niver a better man clim't t' fell; a decent, stiddy man as iver was; niver heard a wrang word from him.' 'Eh, but! it's past finding out t' way young uns goes, and auld ones stays.' 'Poor lass, she's lost as good a mate as ever woman had.' 'Poor barns, they've lost a fadder afore they kent him.' And so sorrowfully they turned away from the grave, whereon flowers had been strewn and wreaths laid by hands of men who in their common regret forgot all party differences and thought only of Joseph Hawell, as a man the 'Blues and Yellows' were alike proud of in life, and alike determined to honour in death.

I was a traveller in foreign lands when the news of Joseph Hawell's death reached me, and I felt for a moment stunned. As I realised it, it seemed to me as if I did not care to see Skiddaw again. He was a piece of it; and Skiddaw without him would be no Skiddaw at all, such an ideal yeoman shepherd; so tender-hearted to the yeanlings; so true to his mountain flock; such a man among men, honest and upright, reliable; one always knew somehow that if Joe was present, men right and left of him would

behave like gentlemen; so high-minded and bent on the 'Just and True'; and, 'as the great ones only are, in his simplicity sublime.' His influence was wider and deeper than he had dreamed of, and I felt that with Joe Hawell a power that had worked for righteousness in a whole fell-side community, had passed as far as visible form goes from the earth.

On reaching home, it was with a sad heart that I neared the solitary fell-side farm that had been so darkened with loss. There was the same kitchen; the fiddle was on the wall; the bacon flitches hung from the rafter; the stuffed heads of the two old favourite shepherd dogs, 'Dainty' and 'Rob,' looked out from under the triumphal arch of sickles from the wall; the gun rested close by; the medicine horn and lambing bottle were in their places, and the old row of books that the father and he had so often turned to for thought and inspiration, were in their shelf—but there was no Joe! Robert took me by the hand and bade me sit on the settle, and he would tell me all about it. The poor wife said nothing, but just rose quietly and began to spread the table and set on tea, and when I urged that I would not have her fash her-

self so or put herself out of the way for me, she urged that it would have been Joe's wish, and I said no more.

Then the dogs came in. 'Ah,' said Robert, 't' rough un, "Jess," has not forgotten her master yet. She was sair put out o' t' way when my brother lay ill, whined at nights and would not be comforted; and she has only just now, after ten weeks' coaxing, consented to follow me when I go to the Fell.'

'And did you have no thought of Joseph's worsening,' I said, 'when he took ill?'

'No,' said Robert, 'but rather a strange thing happened just a week before. I am not superstitious, and I said little about it. But I woke early just as it was beginning to be dawn and saw a sad face looking upon me. I knew the face well, it was Joe's wife's sister, and I thought I was dreaming and sat up, and the face still looked very sadly and then faded away, and I felt it must be a vision. I have wondered since if it was meant as a token to us. She was the first person, however, that came to help us when Joe died. It is singular, is it not? Eh dear! but it's a sair heart that I have as I go shepherding now; for it's when I'm amang



JOSEPH HAWELL.

t' sheep I mostly what seem to miss him. It comes ower me t' warst when I am looking at t' ewes that we used to talk ower together. You would like to see some of the letters, I daresay, we received when poor Joe went.' And saying this, the stalwart man, who loved his brother as tenderly as a woman, put a bundle of letters into my hand.

'But,' said I, as I gave back these precious documents to the owner, 'did he not leave any papers behind him? He is spoken of in one letter as gifted beyond ordinary measure as a public speaker.'

'Well,' replied the brother, 'he left very little in writing; but you know we kept his speeches. They are scattered up and down the newspapers.' And following into the Herdwick-prize room, I soon found myself deep in the speeches Joseph Hawell had from time to time delivered in the political cause he championed.

I asked if he took much trouble in the preparing of his speeches, and I was told that he did; worked hard for nights beforehand, and sometimes, as our greater orators have done, learned a bit of his intended speech by heart. Joseph had as library, up there in the rafter-smoke, some old 17th and

18th century tomes, full of the breath of English spoken pure. English history was his chief study; but 'here,' said the good wife sadly, 'is a book he oft read in, particularly on Sunday afternoons.' It was a magnificent folio copy of *The Whole Duty of Man, The Gentleman's Calling, The Art of Contentment*, and *The Christian Birth-right*, printed by Norton, at Oxford, in 1695. As I turned over its well-thumbed pages I thought that Joseph Hawell had gone to good models for his masterful English, and had drunk wholesome draughts of goodly thought and wisdom as he studied.

'Did he leave no other written papers?'

'Yes, he left a few songs he wrote from time to time.'

I asked to see them. 'God Save Ireland from Disunion,' was the title of one; another, in rough copy, was a sheep-shearing song.

Had Joseph written anything else? Yes; there was just one letter or two he had left behind him in rough copy, and I was welcome to see them if I cared. I did care; and was rewarded.

He had latterly been a bit troubled in his mind by a friend who had what are called 'free-thinking notions.' And Joe, who was

as dead against that kind of cant as any religious cant—and he was, as I can testify, hard upon this latter—had delivered his soul.

The letter was written on February 9th, 1891, and the hand that wrote it was cold and stiff on February 20th. I dare to look upon this letter as the yeoman shepherd's last will and testament. It runs as follows :

‘DEAR FRIEND,—I have received your books, and am much obliged. I have not yet got them read thoroughly, but so far they have but caused a reaction in my mind in favour of the Christian religion, and led me to have recourse to some fine old books written more than a hundred years ago, in a bold and intelligent hand, proving that astronomy and science are a powerful proof of the might and majesty of an Almighty Creator.

‘Could you follow up your science by winging your way to the highest star of observation, you would there see other skies expanded and other planets and systems established, each giving harmony and perfection of attention to time by the nicest rule. Then wend your way past other ten thousand worlds, and at the end of this vast tour you would still be muddling in the suburbs of creation, only to find that no imagination can

fix the limits of His creating hand, and that conceited, ignorant, and insignificant man is absolutely unable to comprehend the grandeur and correctness of His magnificent workmanship. Then am I to be told that the builder of this stupendous structure is incapable of such a paltry performance as taking possession of our souls and restoring our lifeless bodies at His own good will and pleasure?

‘I find,’ he adds, ‘Carlyle’s work very instructive, and many of the passages furnish evidence of the existence of the great Disposer of all events.’

I said this should stand as Joseph Hawell’s last will and testament. No; there was another letter, written evidently just at the end of last year, in which he begs of a neighbour the loan of a horse and gear to enable him to bring down on a sledge from Lonscale Crag one of the finest single stones there. He wishes to set it up in some field on the farm, and have his father’s name upon it and his father’s deeds and prowess as a breeder of Herdwick sheep, with a single verse of descriptive poetry beneath, and he feels sure that his friend will lend a hand ‘to erect a monument to at least one member of the Hawell family whose stainless, honourable,

and straightforward life will always be pointed to with pride by his descendants.'

Joseph Hawell! the horses have gone, and the sledge has brought its heavy burden to the home-farm; and on it are engraved two names instead of one, for there are those who honour the son who would so have honoured his sire. There by that mountain path they both of them knew so well of old is the grey memorial cross set, and on it is carved, in symbol of eternity, the endless knot their Norse forefathers used. A simple verse is engraved at the base.

Those who pass the 'gale' for the meadows of Lonscale, to breast the back of Blencathra, or to climb the slopes of Skiddaw, shall surely learn that our Cumberland mountains still as of old breed men of high purpose and noble endeavour; and that still, from following the sheep, God calls His chosen ones by lives of kindliness, simplicity, and straightforward goodness, to guide their brothers in the path of duty, righteousness, and truth.

A FAMOUS YEW-TREE.

THERE is a passage in George Fox's *Journal* that brings one face to face with a brave man of God, reveals the spirit of true martyrdom, and makes one envious of his dazzling courage:

‘Now were great threatenings given forth in Cumberland that if ever I came there again they would take away my life. When I heard it, I was drawn to go to Cumberland, and went to the same parish whence these threatenings came, but they had not power to touch me.’

It is a passage that attracts one to the apostle of the leathern-apron, and makes one desire to know the scenes of his life's travail. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that when one found oneself at Keswick in a neighbouring valley to Lorton, one should wish to visit one of the places ever associated with his memory, and see the spot whence

the echoes of the preacher's voice have never died.

Associated with this wish to follow the footsteps of George Fox, was the desire to see the Yew-tree, 'Pride of Lorton Vale,' which, on the day of Fox's sermon, provided seats for the listeners. For the famous yew-trees in the Lake District are becoming each year fewer. It is true that the great yew in Tilberthwaite is still standing, but that famous hollow trunk that kept alive the name of the mission preacher St. Patrick, in Patrick's Dale or Patterdale, has fallen; and the great winter storm of 1883 worked havoc upon Seathwaite's sacred brotherhood:

'Those fraternal four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;
Huge trunks!—and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine
Up-coiling and inveterately convolved—'

are now a wreck,—one fell, the others were riven to pieces.

Here in the Lake District, by command of bluff King Hal, each estatesman was obliged to plant a yew-tree by his homestead, in order that he might never lack of wood for his bow when he was called—as he not unfrequently was called—to the Marches, in defence of the

Border. And in many places, long after the homestead has passed away, the solitary yew survives to tell us of the troublous times of old. It was not long since an estatesman sent down to the local museum of Keswick the old oaken bow-chest of his fathers, which, though it has been long used as a meal-ark, by its carving clearly shows it was intended for other use. The family name of Bowman is a common one in Cumberland, and still in our neighbourhood the field-names preserve a memory of the village bowman's prowess, and the 'butts' field is a word of common parlance.

But it is George Fox, the man of peace, that we were most interested in, as we crossed the Keswick Valley and climbed the long slope of Whinlatter to pay a visit to the brave man's preaching place, and it was mere coincidence that that preaching place should be associated with weapons of war.

People do not realise how fair a view of the whole Skiddaw range is presented to them as they climb that pass, or they would climb it oftener. The higher one climbs, the higher does Skiddaw appear, and deep-bosomed mountain-side in all its massy grandeur of emerald green and lilac shade in spring, of puce and burnished bronze in autumn, im-



THE LORTON VEW.

presses one with its calm and restfulness. The cloud, sure sign of fine weather, rests upon its utmost peak to-day, and irresistibly recalls the lines of Wordsworth's sonnet :

‘Veiling itself in mid-Atlantic clouds
To pour forth streams more sweet than Castaly,’

while the pleasant farms with the far-off interchange of happy cock-crowing, glitter at our feet, and, like an arm of some great ocean-loch, the white waters of Bassenthwaite come round the precipice of Barf, and sweep out of the shadow of Wythop woods into the September sunshine. On our left rises Grasmoor, haunt of the dottrel, and Hobcarton Crag, beloved of rare mountain flowers. So we crest the long slope and drop down into Lorton, with the hill-sides on our right, golden with gorse against the westering sun. Turning sharply to the left as soon as the village is reached, we pass a kind of pleasant rural street, if that may be called a street which has houses only on the one side of it, and just as we emerge into the country again, find ourself at a spot where the road forks, a portion of it going over a beck bridge into a farm enclosure by a picturesque old water-mill and byre, and a portion of it,—the main road

to Loweswater,—bending sharply to the right to go across the valley by the north side of the stream, which is here hidden from view by a long barn building. If we pause at this point we cannot help being struck by the sombre mass of a great yew-tree standing in a pleasant meadow close to the beck, where at one time there was doubtless a ford. This is what Wordsworth described as

‘A yew-tree, Pride of Lorton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore,
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched
To Scotland’s heaths ; or those that crossed the sea
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.
Of vast circumference and gloom profound
This solitary tree !—a living thing
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed.’

It is not to-day the noble tree it was when Fox was here, and the prophecy of the poet was only a few years since like to have been made utterly vain. For its form and aspect was so magnificent that its owner sold it to a Lorton wood merchant, and it was just about to be cut down when some memory of Fox’s

sermon awoke in the breast of a faithful member of the Society of Friends in the neighbourhood, and the wood merchant good-naturedly went off his bargain.

It is true that it shows no signs of decay, but it has suffered loss. Two of its main stems were shattered years ago by a hurricane, and were sawn off at the bole. Let us go along the road to the farm buildings, and turn back down to what now serves for a watering-place for horses. It is thus we shall best get an idea of how 'it stands single, in the midst of its own darkness.'

The branches stretch their shadow over the stream, and the ripple of the sunny talkative beck contrasts strangely with the deep silence of the solemn tree. If we go up to Whinfell Hall and ask a keen observer of nature and plant life about this famous yew, Mr. Wilson Robinson will tell us that he once measured the trunk at its least circumference and found it 23 feet 10 inches, and that, about thirty years ago, a strong south-east gale came with hurricane force down Hope Ghyll, wrenched off one of the side limbs and carried away a third of the tree. Another limb has fallen since then, and yet, shattered and torn, what a magnificent ruin it

is, how well worth climbing over Whinlatter Pass to visit.

After gazing up the beck towards the picturesque bridge from which we first surveyed the yew, towards the grand old farmstead and its cluster of sycamores as a background for the bridge, let us go back to the bridge and across into the meadow wherein the 'Pride of Lorton Vale' stands, and, gazing from under the tree towards the west and south, let us wonder at the beauty of faintly bronzed fern on Whiteside, the amethystine lilac of the Grasmoor mass, the far-off cones of Red Pike and High Stile blue above Mellbreak, and far to the west, Herdhouse ghostly grey; all seeming to join in shutting out the world and making the quiet emerald meadow in which we stand a sanctuary for thought and restfulness.

Then let us go back to that day in the year 1653 when George Fox, having narrowly escaped death by a boy's rapier thrust, and with his hand and wrist still smarting from the cruel blow of a rough fellow down at Bootle, where they mobbed him on the previous Sunday, pale and worn came hither to the ford and found already James Lancaster, one of his disciples, who had gone forward

as an avant-courier on the way to Cocker-mouth, busy haranguing the people.

The quiet meadow of to-day was on that day full of armed men. A detachment of Cromwell's soldiers had been told off from Cockermouth to keep the peace—it being known that Fox was on his way to Lorton; and Mr. Larkham, the Congregationalist minister of Cockermouth, and Priest Wilkinson, the Vicar of Brigham-cum-Mosser-cum-Lorton, were probably among the crowd that covered the field and stood by the banks of the stream. 'The people,' we read in Fox's *Journal*, 'lay up and down in the open, like people at a leaguer.' Fox had seen something of camp life during the late civil war, and he doubtless felt that day that, man of peace though he was, the field of the Lorton yew would be indeed a field of battle for him.

But what interests us most as we gaze upon this venerable tree to-day in these pleasant pastures beside the waters of peace, is not so much the memory of the crowd of Cromwellian soldiers and members of the Church militant who came out that day to 'sorely withstand' George Fox, as the vision of the boughs of this sable and majestic yew-

tree filled with the listening ears and eager eyes of those who heard that day the weary and way-worn prophet of the Lord, 'largely declare the word of Life' as he knew it, and 'open the everlasting Gospel to them.' Fox tells us that 'this tree was so full of people that I feared they would break it down.'

Look at it now, and think of it no longer as a broken yew-tree, sown here perchance by some far wandering bird centuries ago, but as a living witness to the power of men who have a living Gospel to declare to win the souls of their fellows, and lead them into communion with God who is a spirit. Men once heard the voice of Fox sound out here, above the babble of the beck and the hum of the multitude and the protests of the Lorton minister, and those who crowded on the yew-tree boughs felt light instead of darkness—sun instead of shadow, was their portion, and we read, 'Many hundreds were convinced that day, and received the Lord Jesus Christ and His free teaching with gladness.'

We are not Quakers, but at least our hearts beat in unison with the earnest teacher of the Truth he knew, to an age that

was helped and is still helped by that Truth ;
and as we leave the field of the tree,

‘Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched
To Scotland’s heaths ; or those that crossed the sea
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,’

we rejoice to think that beneath its sable
boughs, the preacher of the way of peace as
better than war, once preached a sermon ;
and we trust, that for many a long year still,
‘single in the midst of its own darkness as
it stood of yore,’ may stand the Lorton Yew.

LODORE AFTER STORM.

FIVE days of continual tempest and five nights of storm-wind from the Atlantic had tried the nerves and tempers and tested the sleeping powers of all in the Keswick Vale. Nothing like wind to set folks 'fratching'; and that anybody was still on speaking terms with his neighbour argued well for the kindliness of the townsmen and villagers.

At last it would seem as if the wind had blown itself out, and at six o'clock of a grey February evening silence and calm fell upon the sodden, weary vale. But an ominous cloud-pack boiled up over the western hills, and the barometer went down two inches. The cattle were scarcely 'suppered up' for the night in the farmsteads and the shopmen had scarcely clanged down their last shutter, when the wind again awoke, and the hills thundered and the trees groaned, and we

knew that America had sent us another cyclone. The hail-showers thrashed the panes, the windows rattled, the chimneys moaned and sighed, and though tired men and women went to bed, it was only to feel their house-walls shake as if an earthquake shock were passing underneath, and only to wonder which would be the first chimney-stack to fall. The wind grew to a hurricane, and people as they lay in sleepless fear upon their beds heard strange voices in the storm—cries of sailors in agony upon a bitter shore or perishing in the deep. Then the wind would be heard to try all round the house and see if perchance a window-frame would give an entrance and indoor havoc be possible; or a slate would whirl up with a crack and come down clattering on the roof and spin off into the darkness.

The dawn broke dimly, and the pastures of the middle vale lay like a wan sea with isles of emerald. Broken boughs hung gaunt and creaking upon the nearest trees, and the Irish yews curtsied and danced and split themselves into a hundred spires of nodding darkness against the angry sky. But the hurricane, however much it might make man cower and fear, had no power upon the thrush,

who saw, behind the hurricane light of cheerless morn, the dawn of springtide and love and calm. No storm could

‘Quell or disconcert her golden tongue,’

and there, while the wind fluffed her breast to twice its size, she fluted from the swaying holly tree her old familiar call to the slow to ‘be quick! be quick!’ to the drowsy, to ‘pray, get up! get up!’ and then to the sad to ‘cheer up now! cheer up! cheer up!’

I answered her challenge and arose. The lake from end to end was ridged with foam, and great clouds of water, torn from the surface, were marching from west to east. Borrodale was black with storm. There was no snow on Skiddaw, though the sleet had in a night turned its fine old head grizzled grey, but over Grasmoor and over Grisedale it seemed as if some huge ocean wave had broken and left its froth behind it.

Nearer, however, than on Grasmoor and on Grisedale there was snow. Far down beyond the purpling ‘Walla’ woodland, lay, in a crevice of the hills between Gowder Crag and Shepherd’s Crag, a mighty drift of seeming winter whiteness. That was no gift of winter; it was the gift of the past night’s

rain. Gazing at it through a good field-glass one could see that the white drift was a falling torrent, and as one gazed one almost, in fancy, heard

‘the roar

That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lodore.’

I knew that they only can see Lodore aright who will brave storm and tempest, for so swiftly does this splendid cataract pour itself away that an hour after the rains have ceased upon the Watendlath fells it dwindles to its natural size, loses its milk-white charm, and ceases to summon the wanderer to its presence. But this morning its spell was potent to touch all hearts, and that white winter wreath of snow and sound called us from far away. Down by the old monks’ path we went, that the hoofs of sumpter-mules in the Middle Ages had worn deep into the soft soil;—it was to-day a torrent-bed of bubbling water. On by the village school, where, instead of the pattering of children’s clogs upon the doorstep, to-day the Greta’s water gushed and fell in miniature cascade. Over the bridge beneath Greta Hall, on which the pencil-makers hung in enforced idleness, for there was too much water to allow the use of the millwheel. ‘Brig is pinched to be

large eneuf for t' watter to-day,' they cried; and so to the town. 'Dar bon! but thoo hed better keep to lee-side oop street—slates is fleein' same as leaves i' winter,' said an old friend as he passed me. 'Well, Betty, what such a night have you had?' I said to another old friend at the street corner. 'Loavins me!' she answered, 'but it's been a capper. Cwoal cart was lifted up and clean turned ower befoar my eyes in oor back yard; and I've been up and dressed sin five this morn. What I thowt wi' mysel if any-thing's goin' to happen, it 'ull not dea fur us *all* to be naked, and sea I got intil my cleas!'

So up the main street—powdered with broken slates and plaster from the house fronts, and out into the Borrodale road we went. Trees were laid by their heels at the church gate, the holly berries gleamed in thousands by the roadside; the wind had done what in this open winter the birds had failed to do. Thence on to the Great Wood. Fine spruces lay across the road, and the roadmen and woodcutters were busy making passage possible for the cart traffic. Such a scent of Christmas trees they made as they hewed away at the spruce branches

one felt oneself a child again, and so with a child's heart forward. All through the purple woodland were white patches in topmost boughs, the wounds that the fierce wind had given them. Only one thing the tempest had been powerless to touch; these were the tender lichens and the velvet mosses on trunk and wall. How they gleamed and shone in the forest twilight! And whilst the boughs clashed and the wood was filled with groans and shrieks and cries, there, by the wall and on the ground and on the tree-stems, in quiet restfulness and silent beauty the fearless mosses grew.

But this was not all the gentle life that seemed to fear no storm, for quavering along from bough to bough a school of long-tailed titmice went in unalarmed pleasure. The wind that shook the oak seemed unable to touch them, and down beside me the tiny wren played his old happy game of hide-and-seek, as if, instead of being lashed by a cyclone, the woods were still as eventide in June.

Cat Ghyll, beloved of Southey, roared at us as we passed, and one heard the wind like a trumpet blowing from the steep of Falcon Crag.

Now clear view was gained of Derwent-water, and one noted that the lake lay in long

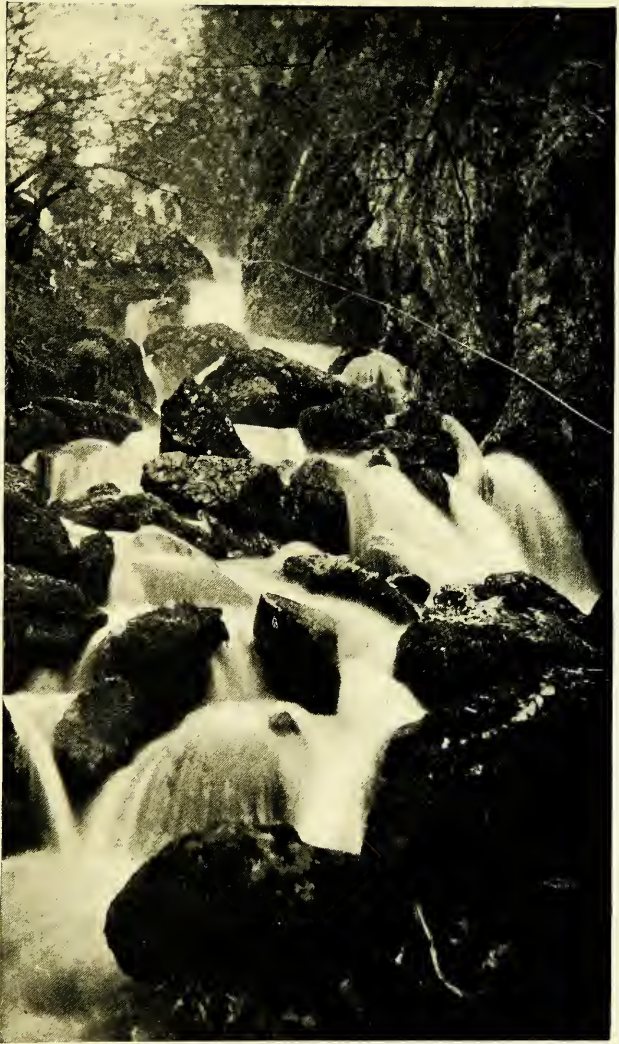
patches of many colours, here bright green, there slate blue, there brown, here white and wan, but ridged throughout with foam ; and suddenly, as if it sprang upward from hidden depths, a water wraith would leap to sight and other spirits would join it, and the whole silver company of ghostlike vaporous forms would come dancing across from the further shore and lose themselves in cloud-like dust upon the land. Or here again would rise a tiny waterspout and spin and spin the water up into mid-air, then march and counter-march, lie down, and rise again. While all the time upon the shore beneath the roadway, waves broke and surge tumbled, with moaning of a troubled sea that might not rest. It was something in such a whirl of sound and hissing of such restless waters to feel far up on the other hand, above the russet grey-green draperies and the lilac shales, the calm of the storm-proof citadel of Falcon Crag. We gained Barrow, and heard the waterfall bellowing in the wood ; but it was Lodore that we had set out to see, and Lodore shone white and clear upon its steep only half-a-mile away.

Full sight of Lodore had now been gained, but not before two other cataracts flashing to one channel from Gowder Crag had claimed

our wonder, while we watched the water fall, as it seemed, out of heaven, down by the silver birches, down by the silver shale, and turn both to darkness by its white contrast. But what a magnificent rose-red glow those birch trees showed, and how with auburn glory the larches gleamed! how too in silken grey and delicate yellow the ash trees climbed the crags! We went forward, but not till we had noted that, while all the world towards Grange seemed one great grey water-flood, here right in front of the purple-brown cliff in whose cleft lay the white Lodore, stood up a little meadowy hill of verdure green as May—the first home-field of the wandering Viking who pushed his long ship ashore at Ravenglass and made his way over the Styhead Pass to ancient Borrodale. For in this green field still flows the spring where Ketel the Viking, who afterwards gave his name to the Wyke which we call Keswick to-day, drank in the olden time. Ketel's Well, as we gaze upon that emerald mound, takes us back to the ninth century and the first coming of the Norsemen to our dales; and what was it that bade the hardy Norse rover choose to pitch his camp by the spring on yonder hill but that same glorious cataract of Lodore, whose

gleaming waters and whose voice of thunder speaks to our heart as it one time spoke to his. Nay, for that weary wanderer over sea, Lodore spoke sweeter things. As he listened to the torrent's voice, there came back memories of his own home-land and all the sound and sight of those fair 'fosses' and those shining 'ghylls' from which he was an outlawed exile.

We pass on beyond the hollies, beyond the amber reed-bed, beyond the grey copse, and gain the gate to the Fall. We cross the meadow and enter the wood and stand upon the little platform whence the Fall in its fulness may be seen. What strikes one at once is the majesty of the high-towering crag of Gowder to the left of Lodore. What strikes one next, is the feeling of a certain lack of height in the fall. It does not come rushing over a sheer precipice; it is not cloud-born; one seems to know that somewhere not far off a valley stream is passing along through quiet meadows and woodland, and something of the fierce wildness of its fall is curbed and tamed by the thought. Yet as we gaze to-day so white is the heaven in the rift between the cliffs whence it surges into sight, that a very little imagination enables us to feel as if the whole of that white interspace were foam, and



LODORE AFTER A STORM.

one's heart is stirred. Not in a rift, but from the topmost height we think we see and hear a visionary cataract fall and fall.

Up now through broken boulders, wet with perpetual mist, slippery with sodden leaf of russet gold, up till a double wych elm, or two elms bound in sisterly embrace—as if they had in fear clutched one another as they stood in awe upon the torrent's brink, is gained; there in shelter of a huge rock, emerald-coated, silver-shining with the spray, we shelter from the drenching water-dust and see another view of glorious Lodore. See and hear, for while the milk-white waters flash and swirl around the ebon boulders in mid-fall, we hear the tall upstanding cliffs make echo to their voice—such sound as he who hears can never quite forget. We climb again up by a slippery path only fit for a goat's foot, helped by impending branches, helped more by the thought that yonder one will gain not only the noblest view of the waterfall, but a far outlook over the wide-watered vale to grey-blue western hills, beyond which booms the sea that gave us, on the wings of the wind, all this majesty of sound and motion.

In this hurricane, the salt of that ocean is on one's lips, and if its actual murmurs and

the 'scents of the infinite sea' are denied us, at least by proxy they are ours. For as we slowly win our way upward the scent of Lodore fills the air, even as its sound fills our ears. Not the kind of paper-mill scent one knows so well within the locks or by the backwaters of the Thames, but scent born of mountain springs and fellside tarns and peaty meadows—scents as delicate as they are subtle.

We have gained our vantage point for sight and sound. The huge rocks appear like leviathans bobbing their noses through the foam. A tree trunk has fallen, and seems to have been caught and held by the mouth of some vast hippopotamus, who rejoices as the torrent dashes over his vast back. And the sound is not of bellowing behemoth or snorting river-horse. No; but such sound as seems to bring all worlds to unison. Shut your eyes, lean, and listen; you may hear a mighty army tramping by, you may hear the clashing of innumerable bells, you may hear the blare of trumpets, you may hear the shouting of a festal multitude, and ever beneath the deepest harmonies the tattoo of the thundering river-god, the drum-drum-drumming of Lodore.

One cannot wonder that hither in 1802

came Charles Lamb, the lover of the city's roar, to listen and rejoice. Keats, too, in 1816 came hither and went, as Lamb went back, a sadder and a wetter man; but it is of Southey and his two children, his Edith May and his darling Herbert, we think to-day—he who in the autumn of 1809 heard the same stream saying the same things it says to us to-day, and who writing to his brother Tom on board the *Dreadnought* under date October 18, 1809, said :

‘I hope you will approve of a description of the water of Lodore made originally for Edith and greatly admired by Herbert. In my mind it surpasses any that the tourists have yet printed. Thus it runs : “Tell the people how the water comes down at Lodore? Why, it comes thundering and floundering, and thumping and bumping, and jumping, and hissing and whizzing, and dripping and skipping, and grumbling and rumbling and tumbling and falling and brawling, and dashing and clashing and splashing and pouring and roaring, and whirling and curling, and leaping and creeping, and sounding and bounding, and chattering and clattering with a dreadful uproar—and that way the water comes down at Lodore.”’

We turned for home ; a patch of blue sky shone momentarily above the purple hollow of sound and foam. And though still 'the forest cracked, the waters curled,' a sunbeam showered radiance as it flew by moaning woodland and by silent crag. In the Great Wood all colours of purple, amber, rose, and amethyst leapt out at the passing of that gleam. One could not but compare the marvellous and changeful effects of light and colour to those that, in some enchanted land of mystery, the coloured fires of the wizard of the pantomime call forth, for our children's amazement.

Now all near was dark, while far ahead the witchery of the golden woodland grew. Now Walla Crag stood purple grey, now shone in lucent silver powdered with larch-tree gold, whilst ever on beyond the woody lane, Skiddaw, as blue as solid cobalt, rose calmly up into a wandering storm-white sky. And yet for all this witchery of colour, for all this magic transformation scene, one vision stayed—that far-off wreath of quiet snow,—snow that had turned on nearer view to scent and sound, to life and light and laughter, to power and impassioned loveliness, there in the resonant chasm of Lodore.

A NORTH COUNTRY NIMROD.

WE shall never hear again
On the fell or in the plain
John Crozier's 'Tally-ho!'
Never see him through the rain
And the sun, with might and main
Follow on from crag to crag, while the hounds give
tongue below.

Dark the valley east and west,
Clouds are on Blencathra's crest,
The hunter home has gone :
And the Squire they loved the best
Now is carried to his rest—
Eighty years has Death the huntsman followed hard—
the chase is done.

But I think I see him stand—
Rough mountain-staff in hand,
Fur cap and coat of grey—
With a smile for all the band
Of the sportsmen in the land,
And a word for all the merry men who loved his
'Hark-away!'

Last hunter of your race!
As we bear you to your place,
We forget the hounds and horn,
But the tears are on our face,
For we mind your deeds of grace,
Loving-kindness late and early shown to all the village-born.

‘It’s a dark daay for Threlkett is this un, hooiver! T’ald Squire’s gone doon!—girstest Master of t’ dogs i’ Cummerland sin Jwohn Peel I’s e warrant him—an’ a gay tiff ald feller an’ aw. Deeth has hoaled him at last; but what, he’d bin runnin’ gaame fer mair nor eighty year noo. He’s bin at Maister-o-hunt job langer nor ony man i’ t’ whoale country, I suppoase, has t’ ald Squire. It’s sixty-fowr year or mair sin he took t’ horn. Eh, my! bit what a heart he hed! Kindest-hearted man i’ these parts—niver wad let a nebbor-body want for owt if he thowt he cud dea good by lendin’ a hand, and pertikler fond o’ t’ barns; school children was fit to be mad wid him on treat-daays. And why what, he gat scheul-hoose builded, and laid doon a hoondred poond fer Parish Room, let alean gevin site i’ t’ village. It’s a dark day fer Threlkett, I’s e telling ye, and dogs hes lost best friend and t’ foxes t’ warst enemy they’ve ivver hed here-aboot.’

We were standing by the Druid's Circle on Castrigg Fell, and as the old yeoman spoke to me I looked across the valley to the great buttressed height of Blencathra—blacker to-day beneath, by reason of the slight snow covering on its summit, and saw in its grove of larches the white house, half-farm, half-mansion, whence the oldest Master of the Hunt, in Britain, had gone for his far journey. Never again would the men who follow the hounds pass through the gate of the Riddings, with the fox and the hound carved in stone on either side of them, to be met and to be greeted by the cheery old Squire on hunting days; never again, after a long day's hunt, would they repair to the Farrier Inn or to the Salutation Inn, mid-village, to wait the coming of the Master 'ere they all 'howked in' to the 'tatie-pot' he had provided them.

There was a time when all the farmhouses for miles round, and every cottage home, was glad, because a Threlkeld man had come to his own again, and I could not help contrasting the gladness of that day, as told us by Wordsworth in his *Feast of Brougham Castle*, and *Song of the Shepherd Lord*, with the sadness of this day for all the country side,

now that another shepherd-lord had gone unto his own. That shepherd-lord we read

‘Was honoured more and more,
And ages after he was laid in earth
“The good Lord Clifford” was the name he bore.’

They were very different men, that shepherd-lord and this our friend, the Master of the Blencathra Hunt, John Crozier: but both of them had been reared in the same quiet pastoral scene, and among the same fine race of shepherd gentlemen. Both had learned the lesson of this mountain side,—

‘Love had they found in huts where poor men lie,
Their daily teachers had been woods and hills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.’

Both men had won the hearts of the simple people far and near, and ages after he is laid in earth, as he will be laid by the side of his beloved wife, in the Threlkeld Churchyard, men will speak of ‘t’ald Squire,’ and enthusiastically tell of his hunting feats, and remember how he loved his native village.

The love of hunting which John Crozier inherited from his father, who lived at Gate Ghyll Farm on Blencathra’s side, and who

turned over to his son the mastership of what were then spoken of as 'the Threlkeld dogs' in the year 1840, is a passion with our dales' folk which only those who live amongst them can understand.

The 'varmint' is the natural enemy of the shepherd, and this adds zest to the day's sport. In our churchwardens' accounts of old time there appears the item 'A fox head, 21s.,' and though in other chapelries 3s. 4d. appears to have been the price paid, such a scourge must Reynard have become that the churchwardens felt they were justified in giving a whole week's wage for the destruction of one fox. Down at Shoulthwaite and, for aught I know, in other dales a fox trap of masonry existed till of late years, built beehive fashion with a hole in the top. If Reynard ventured in to the bait, which was a fine fat hen, he was a prisoner; try to scale the walls how he might the artful one was foiled; but to trap a fox goes against the grain. There are certain things in which our hunt differs from others. Class distinctions are unknown in the field. The Master of the Hunt knows all by their Christian name. It is a social gathering from daylight to dark. The luxury of horses, too, is unknown. The

field are all running huntsmen of the type of old Timothy, of whom Wordsworth wrote, in the year 1800—the childless Timothy who took up his staff, and with the thought of his last child's death heavy upon him could nevertheless not refuse the invitation of 'the horn and the hark! hark-away,' and 'went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.'

On that day when 'Skiddaw was glad with the cry of the hounds,' old Timothy's daughter Ellen had been dead five months or more, or he probably would not have followed the hunt, for there is a kind of etiquette that the hunters in the dales observe, and they would no more go a-hunting within a month after the death of their beloved, than they would miss going to church on the Sunday following the funeral. I remember once being asked by a widower, who was in great sorrow and could not get away from his thoughts, whether he should take what he knew to be the best physic—a day with the dogs. I asked, 'What would your wife have said?' His answer came quite straight: 'She wad hev clapped a bit o' lunch in my pocket, gi'en me ma staff, shut door upon me, and telt me not to show my feace until supper time.' I answered, 'That's enough,' and the man was a new

being when he returned from the hunt, more able to wrestle with his sorrows.

The women folk are as keen as their husbands. They tell of a 'woman body' at Wythburn who, joining the hounds in full cry, and finding her skirts in the way, stopped, took a knife out of her pocket, and slit her petticoat in order that with a 'divided skirt' she might the surer be in at the kill. How keen the men are, is shown by the fact that beginning as youngsters to follow the drag, and carrying on a love of the sport through the prime of manhood, they may be still found from 75 to 80 and over, out with the hounds at the call of the horn. Nay, even when their sight fails them, they will follow, and it is on record that a veteran whose eyes were failing him and who had the rare good luck of a vantage ground to see the finish of the hunt, and was so maddened by the hurried and eager account from his companions of how the hunt was going, that he cried out 'Hang thur ald een o' mine! I wish that they wer nobbut out all togidder; I believe I wad see better through t' hooals!'

Fox hunting in the Lake Country tests the sportsman. None but a true lover of the chase would be content to breakfast and get

away with the stars (as in winter he oft-times has to do that he may get to the heights before the hounds are loosed)—and, facing all weathers, come back with the stars. He has to battle with storm and tempest. It may be fine in one valley and a roaring blizzard on the other side of the mountain. The old veteran, John Crozier, himself would tell of how he had to lie down on Skiddaw summit in a sudden and blinding snowstorm, and on more than one occasion he and all the hunt have suddenly been enveloped in a thick mist, which made movement almost impossible. And hunting not only tries the heart, it tries the head. A fox gets ‘binked,’ as they call it, or banked, and some one must go up on an almost inaccessible crag to put in the terrier; and a man must know the country, and the probable run of every fox that gets up in front of the hounds. There is no earth stopping; only the bields are known, and the cunning of Reynard is a secret, to be learnt not only by the huntsman and whip but by every single man in the field. As for the foxes, though the old greyhound breed that John Peel knew—20 lbs. to 29 lbs. in weight—have passed away, the little black-legged Irish fox can give a good account

of himself, and from three to five hours and from 25 to 40 miles have not been an uncommon experience of a run.

At the beginning of last century it was not an unusual thing for the hounds to be running 'on the tops' through the night, and the legends of the 'whish-hounds,' or 'spirit-packs' of Cornwall and Devon might very well have been reborn in Borrowdale.

In 1858 took place one of the record runs of the Blencathra pack. The dogs had had already a good morning's work when at noon a big Skiddaw fox jumped up in front of them. He tried to shake off his pursuers by the ordinary hill tactics, but, failing, took to the valley, went by Crosthwaite Church, through Portinscale and Brandelhow, right up Borrowdale, and over the Styhead into Westmoreland. The night fell, but the dogs were heard at Black Hill, marking the fox at an earth. Thence Reynard escaped in the direction of Lancashire, and next day the hounds and the fox were found, the latter dead and the former fast asleep under a crag in Coniston. They must have travelled not far short of sixty miles over the very roughest part of the Lake Country.

The hounds are trained carefully not to break up their foxes, just as they are trained

as carefully not to worry sheep; and this latter is done by the farmers walking the dogs in the summer time and taking them, along with their collies, when they go shepherding on the fells.

The packs are small, but every hound is true as steel. The Blencathra huntsman generally unkennels about 11 couples, and so keen are they at their work that three years ago they gave an account of 76 foxes, last year of 46, and this year, up to date, of 43. But the cost of keeping the pack is very small. £200 clears all expenses, and this is partly accounted for by the kindly interest farmers, who are all members of the hunt, take in it, for they walk the dogs free of charge, and some of them are, in addition, subscribers. Very anxious are these men, too, to do their best by the dogs. The hounds are made members of the family, and their tempers and individualities are studied. A farmer would take it very ill if he did not have the same hound sent him at the end of the hunting season. This reacts by making a bond of enthusiastic interest for members of the field in the running of every dog.

Nor can we omit to mention the sense of brotherhood which binds the hunt together.

As there is no separation of class, so there is no separation of dress; no buttonholes and fine leather boots. The hunting kit is but a flannel shirt, a pair of trousers rolled up to the knee, over a pair of stout woollen hose, a Tam o' Shanter, and a rough alpenstock. The poorest can afford that, and the richest know no better.

Another bond that unites the members of the Blencathra Hunt is the home-made hunting songs which are sung at the end of the day. There is one written by a Patterdale yeoman, which has a good ring in it:

'Now who could help but follow when notes as sweet
as these

Are sounding through the valley and borne upon the
breeze?

Of all the recreations by which our lives are blest,
The chase among the mountains is the purest and the
best.'

And there is another favourite written by Harper, one of the roadmen in the neighbourhood; while Woodcock Graves' immortal ditty, 'D'ye ken John Peel?' is never better sung than at the annual dinner of the Blencathra Hunt.

I am standing at the Druids' Circle and looking across at Naddle. In the hollow of

the ridge is the school of S. John's-in-the-Vale. I remember that the old Squire, John Crozier, got his first learning at that school; and that some years after a poet of more than local fame, John Richardson, became its school-master. He, too, immortalised the Blencathra Hunt, and one of his best songs will, for many years to come, echo the 'tally-ho!' of the late Master of the Hunt:

'The hunt is up, the hunt is up;
Auld Tolly's in the drag;
Hark to him, beauties, git away,
He's gone for Skiddaw Crag.
Rise fra ye'r beds, ye sleepy-heads,
If ye wad plesser know;
Ye'r hearts 't will cheer, if ye bit hear
John Crozier's "Tally-ho!"'

That last line calls us back to the man who has carried on, to a century's ending, the Mastership of the pack his father gave him in charge.

As a lad of 18, John Crozier was already well known as a keen sportsman, as good with his rod in the beck and rivers here about, as he was with his father's hounds, and fond of wrestling as he was of hunting. At that day the pack numbered only six couples. They were kept at the farms all through the



A NORTH COUNTRY NIMROD.

year, and were trained to meet at the sound of the Master's horn. The old Squire would often tell how he would stand on Kiln Hill, blow a blast, and watch the beauties racing across the meadows to his call. John Peel, in those days, was still hunting on the other side of Skiddaw, and John Crozier remembered the last time he saw him was under Wanthwaite Craggs, where, after a long day's run, he invited the old veteran, who was on his white pony, to come home to supper. 'Nay, nay, John,' said Peel, 'I'se freetened o' gettin' needet (benighted),' and so went back on his way to Ruthwaite supperless. 'But I'll see thee again,' he added—who knows they may again have met.

The first thing the young Master did was to improve the breed of his hounds, and this he accomplished by getting a strain from John Peel's kennels. How much of Ruby, 'Ranter, Royal, and Bellman, so true,' spoken of in the song, still runs in the blood of the Blencathra pack, I know not. Other strains since then have been introduced, but a hardier pack never breasted a mountain side, and there is not one of them who would not carry on the line himself, if his fellows failed, to the death.

John Crozier once received the following note: 'To J. Crozier, Esq., M.F.H., from Isaac and Edward Brownrigg, of Brownrigg. This hound (Darling) brought a splendid dog-fox, and after a very exciting hunt ultimately caught it in our house field. About an hour afterwards other five dogs came. After being fed they left, but this one would not leave. We intend having the fox preserved.' After carrying on the hounds at his own cost for 30 years, 'the Squire,' as he was always called, at the request of his neighbours, allowed them to become a subscription pack, in the year 1870. There was a general feeling in the dales that it was not fair to allow all the burden to be upon one man, and on the conditions that he would remain Master, and in case of the hunt ceasing, the hounds should be returned to him. A treasurer and secretary were appointed, and the Blencathra Hunt went on merrily as before.

The Master was fortunate in his huntsmen. Joseph Fearon, of honoured memory, was succeeded by Isaac Todhunter, who carried the horn for 25 years. Isaac Todhunter handed it on to John Porter, who for a like time kept up the best traditions of the pack, which Jem Dalton carries on to-day. The names of

these past huntsmen, with other members of the hunt, are inscribed on the stone of memorial raised in the Threlkeld Churchyard at the charges of the Squire and a few friends; and that pillar in the King's dale—for of this dale John Crozier was truly king—if it does nothing else, goes to prove that the following of the foxes in the Lake District adds years, even as it adds cheer, to the lives of the dalesmen. Thus, for example, one sees that many of the hunters were fourscore years before they were run to earth; one was 89, another 91, another 95, and a fourth 98.

Up till the past two years the old Master of the hunt presided at the annual hunt dinner, but it was known that his health was failing, and though each week up to the end he kept in touch with all the doings of his pack, he did not leave his house. Still week by week members of the hunt would go up and have a 'crack' with him—always to be received with the same courteous inquiry, 'Well, how about your wives and families, are they well? That's right. Is any news stirring? What about the House last night?' He took the keenest interest in politics up to the end, and that came, not unexpectedly, at two o'clock on a quiet starlit morning, Thursday, 5th March, 1903.

I could not wonder that my old friend the yeoman had said it was a dark day for Threlkeld, for he had lived among his own people, and loved them to the end. How they loved him may be gathered from the fact that two days before he died, a casket containing a book in which every householder in the parish had entered his name, with an illuminated address, full of affection and gratitude, for the friendship towards them of a long life, was brought to the house. 'Ya kna,' said my friend, 'they knew t' ald Squire was house-fast, and they likely thowt 't wad cheer 'im up a laal bit.' He never saw it, for it was thought he was too ill to be 'fashed' with it, and he is beyond all earthly cheering now; 'the Hunter is home from the Hill.'

On the following Monday there was such a gathering together of the dalesmen from far and near as had never been seen in Threlkeld Church, or Threlkeld Churchyard. They sang one of the old Squire's favourite hymns. They bore the coffin to the grave with the veteran's hunting cap and crop and the brush of the last fox killed by his pack upon it, and before and after the service they talked of him kindly, as Cumberland folk ever do of the dead; they spoke of him, not only as the

oldest Master of Foxhounds in the land, but as a man who entered into all the social enjoyments of the country-side, and whilst on terms of close intimacy, almost familiarity, with the companions, retained their regard, and in some things set them a good example.

For in an age when the gambling spirit was abroad, it will be remembered that John Crozier never bet a penny in his life. 'I did yance think o' betting a hawpeth o' snaps,' he once said in the vernacular; 'but I kind of considered it ower, and I didn't.' It will be remembered of him, too, that he was against the use of bad language in the field, and that he never would allow, if he could help it, a bit of scandal or 'ill gien gossip.' If he heard one man running down another or passing an unkind judgment, or setting an unkind tale 'agate,' he would jerk out, 'There, noo, thoo mun let that hare sit'—and it sat. 'Ay, ay,' said an old friend as he turned away from the graveyard, 'tho' he said nowt about it, he was a kind o' a religious man, was varra partial to certain hymns, and had his favourite psalms, that he wad gang off quietly to his bit summerhoose most mornings, and tek his prayer book with him. They say t' house-keeper, after her master's death, found t' ald

beuk laid open on summerhooose taäble, I suppose.'

But as they left the churchyard they all in memory saw the old Master in his sealskin cap, with the lappets about his ears—squarely built and strong, with his alpenstock in hand, as the prefatory verse tells :

But I think I see him stand,
Rough mountain staff in hand,
Fur cap and coat of grey,
With a smile for all the band
Of the sportsmen in the land,
And a word for all the merry men who loved his
'Hark away!'

And as they thought of what he has been to them for the last 65 years in the Threlkeld vale, they admitted the truth of the following words :

Last hunter of your race!
As we bear you to your place,
We forget the hounds and horn,
But the tears are on our face,
For we mind your deeds of grace,
Loving-kindness, late and early, unto all the village-born.

A WINTER-DAY ON DERWENT- WATER.

IF November is the month for cloud effect, December certainly is the month for marvellous dawns and eventides. Then it would appear as if by some generous intent to give the minds of men unwonted tranquillity and to impress all the dwellers in the vales with the thought of perfect restfulness, the sun seems to prepare for his rising a heaven of cloudless silver washed with faintest gold. All the heavy ragged companies of the night-wrack seem withdrawn, and very slowly, while Helvellyn stands lilac-grey against the silver dawn, the sun rolls into sight, kindles the cones of Grisedale and Grasmoor, and bids the heavy dew upon the valley meadows rise up in finest lines of delicate gossamer lawn.

Yesterday, though we had little wind in the valley, one could hear the humming and the

roaring of what seemed a tempest in middle heaven, but at night-time heaven and earth were still, and the seven stars in Orion and the Pleiads, 'like fireflies tangled in a silver braid,' shone clear, and we felt that the Frost King had come in earnest. There was no snow on the hills this morning; the leaves at one's feet tinkled as though they were made of iron; I met schoolboys with rosy faces and skates upon their shoulders going off to Tew-fit Tarn—the little tarn upon the ridge dividing Naddle from St. John's in the Vale, that always gives our skaters in the Keswick neighbourhood their first winter happiness. Down to the lake I went, and standing at Friar's Crag, saw that part of it was burnished steel and part black ebon water. It was incredible that one night's frost should thus have partly sealed the lake from sight.

I was bound for Brandelhow to meet the woodman to discuss the felling of certain timber, and through the ice pack, if it were possible, I must needs go. Coasting along round the island, I soon found myself in a narrow inlet of water that stretched half across the lake; tiny spikules of ice that seemed like floating straws were right and left of me in the still water; here and there little delicate



A WINTER'S DAY ON DERWENTWATER.

fans of ice were passed. These miniature ice-islands were the nuclei round which the freezing mixture would crystallise. Forward across towards Lingholme I steered, and suddenly should have been brought up sharp had not the boat, with good way upon it, crashed right into the ice-floe and shown me how unsubstantial a thing this first ice-covering of the lake was. With every stroke of the oar the boat forged its way with marvellous sound of crash and gride, and one remembered how the Ancient Mariner had heard those 'noises in a swound,' and was able to summon up something of the roar with which the great ice-breakers or steam rams on the Neva crash their way up and down the river to keep the waterway clear for the Baltic shipping. But in a short time the difficulty of rowing became doubled, and if it had not been that one saw clear water ahead one would hardly have ventured forward. Meanwhile in the wake of one's boat one saw how swiftly the little ice-elves repaired the damage one had done by bringing back to its own place and rest each fragment one had displaced, and piecing over with exquisite exactness the breach that one had made.

Now the way was clear, for by some

mysterious reason, known only to the water-gods, the shallower the water became as one went shoreward the freer it was of ice. It may have been mere fantasy, but it seemed as if the water so near to freezing was semi-fluid, viscous; always right and left of one swam by the little ice spikules, and the ice fans, with irridescent beauty, floated and shone hard by. Presently another crash was heard, and an ice-belt, only a yard wide, but stretching fifty or sixty yards along, was crashed through, another and another, and so, with alternate noise and silence, one made one's way to Victoria Point, and ran the boat ashore at Brandelhow.

Beautiful as that woodland is in early spring, it seemed that to-day there were more beauties still. The bracken was silver-dusted with frost and shone gold in the sunshine, and the green velvet of the mosses upon tree-trunk and ground only heightened by contrast the rich russet of the fern. I climbed to the russet seat on the rocky knoll above; there, sitting, I watched the gambolling of five squirrels and listened to the crackling as their sharp teeth made short work of the cones and fir-tufts. All these little merry feasters had put on their winter coats, and were much less

red of hue than when I watched them last in August. They had put on their winter tails also. I saw none of that curious white flaxen colour which the squirrel in September seems so proud of, as, with a wave of his brush, he dashes out of sight. There, as I watched these miracles of motion and alertness, I thought of Ruskin—how lovingly he had described them. Here was one leaping on to a twig that bent with just enough of swing in it to allow the little fellow to fly through the air to the next bough. Here was another, now running along the sturdier bough that bent not, now dropping five or six feet into a dark-green tuft, now sitting cosily in a forked branch to munch his midday meal, now racing for pure joy and mischief after his brother up a long tree-trunk, the tail sometimes bent in an arch above the tufted ears, again thrown out straight, and now bent and undulating—truly a balancing-pole, if ever one was needed by such expert gymnasts. Children of perfect knowledge of the woodland boughs, fearless as birds and swift as monkeys, the happy family rejoiced in the winter sunshine, as free of care as the cloudless sky above their heads. I moved, and the jay clanged and screamed from among

the alders below me, and in a moment the happy family had vanished out of sight, and one saw what an intercommunion of alarm against strange comers birds and beasts must surely have. Dropping down from this happy mount—and truly it has been called Mons Beata—I made my way through crackling fern across the chattering little brooklet to the second rocky height further to the southward. Blencathra lilac-grey and Walla Wood purple-brown and High Seat tawny yellow were reflected with such fidelity in the flood below one that the beauty of two worlds seemed to be given me. The tranquillity of the far-away fells was brought right across the flood to one's feet, a couple of wild duck dashed into the water, and with the ripples of their sudden descent they set the whole fellside trembling. Looking now towards Cat Bels, one marvelled at the extraordinary beauty of the colour. Never was such bronze and gold seen to make the sky so blue, as one gazed up to the hummock of Cat Bels; whilst, between our rustic seat and the high road, the woodland hollow was filled with colour of gradation from silver-grey to purple-brown, and here and there a beech tree full of leaf or a Scotch fir green and blue gave

emphasis to the general tone of softest harmony. Passing on through the larches upon the little height, I gained a third seat, and here the chief charm was the outlook up Borrodale. Immediately in the foreground were young Scotch fir; beyond them the lake glinted in silver through leafless birches. Away up Borrodale, with every variety of lilac melting into purple-grey, ridge beyond ridge, one saw the bossy outliers of the Borrodale ranges stand up in sunny calm; one felt the deep tranquillity of Glaramara and of nearer Honister, the only sound a distant cockcrow from the far-off Ashness farm and the quiet inland murmur of Lodore. The glory of the vale was the wonderful Castle Hill, with its echo of old Rome upon its head, that stood black-purple against the further lilac haze. But as one sat there in silent content a school of long-tailed tits came quavering by. They found abundant food, it would seem, in the Scotch firs close beside me, and what the squirrels had done before to open one's eyes to their miracle of movement these long-tailed titmice did again for one here, as I sat and watched their happy quest for food. Such balancing, such joyousness, such fiery energy, such swiftness of

sight, such whispering of heart's content would have made the saddest man glad and the dullest marvel. As I rose from that seat, with a long look up Borrodale, I could not wonder that our Viking forefathers had called it the Vale of the Borg or Castle, for that Castle Hill in Borrodale must surely have seemed to them a giant's hold, the fittest place for some high fortress-camp, as it had seemed to the Romans of an older day.

If the first height one had ascended was rightly called 'Mons Beata,' and the seat one had last left was placed on a hill that might be called Mons Blencathrae, which gave such fair prospect of Blencathra, surely this fair mount might be called 'Mons Borgadalis,' or the Mount of Borrodale.

I heard a whistle, and to my answering hulloa came a shout. The forester was waiting for me away up there on the highest point of the woodland, not far from the main road and above the Brandelhow mines. Descending swiftly and making my way through the frosty undergrowth, with rabbits scuttling here and there and a soft-winged owl lazily fluttering from a bough above my head, I was suddenly aware by the scent that hung upon the fern that a fox had passed that

way. But it must have been in the early morning or 'Brer Rabbit' would not have been about and the jay would have been screaming, and, making the best of my way up to the forester, we soon forgot all about bird and beast in our honest efforts to let in light and give fair outlook to the wanderers who should hither come for rest and thought in succeeding summers.

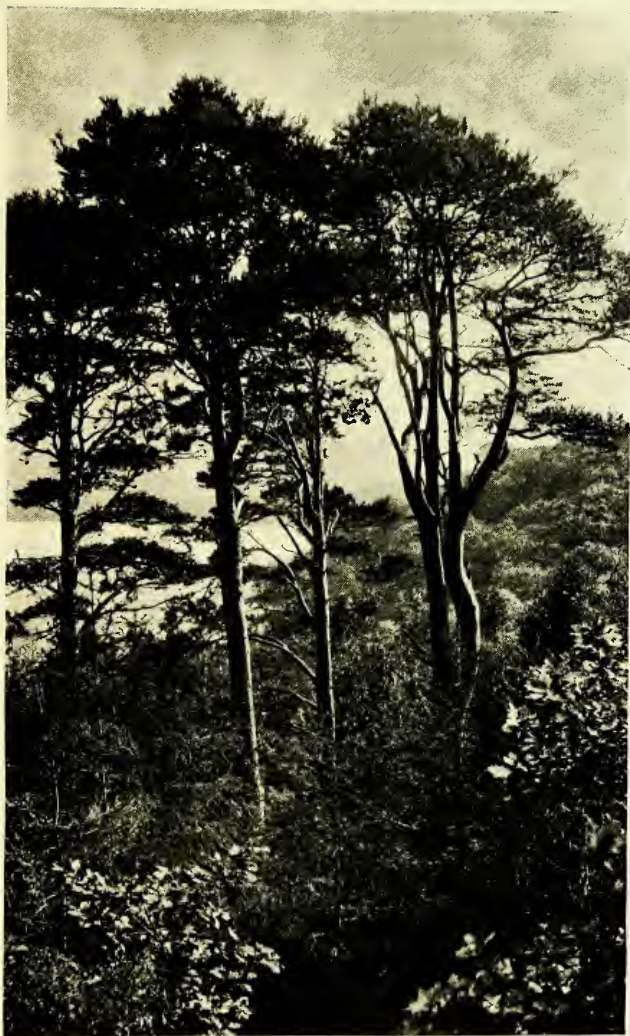
It is not an easy matter to open up a woodland view—the branch of every tree must be questioned, the joy of 'part seen, imagined part' must be had in mind,—but the work was done at last. We sat down for rest on the woodland seat on the fourth rocky eminence on Brandelhow. It is a seat within only a few yards of the high road, yet so screened from it that it is hardly seen; but it is a hill with so fair a prospect that indeed I think angels might pass the little wicket in the wall and visit those who rest here unawares. There is no better name imaginable for this high resting-place than 'Mons Angelorum.' As I thought thus the great sun rolled beyond the hills and all the vale lay darkened. Cat Bels and Brandelhow went black and grey, while still across the lake Walla and Blencathra lay in full sun-

shine; but at that moment, unthought of before, there rose a band of angels all along the riverside, and tiny cloudlets swam up into shadow, and again from shadow into sun. The Mount of the Angels was this height rightly called.

‘It is likely getting late,’ said the forester, ‘and if you do not start soon you’ll happen hardly get through the ice to-night.’

Down to the boat landing in Victoria Bay I went, and as I went the woodland filled with a mysterious light. I thought of St. Francis and the visions he had seen at Al Verna; the sun was beyond the hills, it had faded now even from Walla Crag, but the light from Brandelhow seemed to leap up from the ground, the larches so dim and dead before gleamed into gold; the red bracken at my feet burned like fire; it was an enchanted woodland; the magic after-glow was the enchanter.

I pushed off from the shore, gained the ice-pack, crashed through it but not without difficulty, and won the dark, clear water beyond. The sun had sunk between Robinson and Grisedale, a dark cloud-bar had filled the heavenly interspace, but there in the gap it seemed as if beneath its heavy eyebrow the



MONS BEATA, BRANDELHOW.

eye of God was keeping watch and ward above the quiet land. One had often seen at the seaside the sun sink and the slender pillar of golden light reach downward to the shore, but never had I seen such a magnificent golden roadway laid upon shining water for happy dreams of tired men to follow the flying day, as I saw that eventide upon the silver ice and the darkling flood of tranquil Derwentwater.

WORDSWORTH AT COCKER- MOUTH.

It was a difference that arose on the American question, between Sir James Lowther and his law agent and steward, a certain John Robinson, in the year 1766, that was the prime cause of the fact that Wordsworth, the poet, was born here. For John Robinson resigned his stewardship, and young John Wordsworth, then only 24 years of age, 'a man of great force of character and real human capacity,' was appointed in his place to be 'law agent and steward of the manor of Ennerdale.' To that post, which he occupied for the next 18 years, the young man came from the Penrith neighbourhood, bringing with him as his girl wife a certain Ann Cookson, a mercer's daughter, who could boast, through her descent on her mother's side from the Crackanthorpes, of Newbiggin

Hall, an ancestry that flowed from as far back as the time of Edward III. She was thus well suited to marry the son of the land agent of Sockbridge, near Penistone, who traced his descent through a long unbroken line of sturdy Yorkshire yeomen away in the Penistone neighbourhood, as far as to the time of the Norman Conqueror. They took up their abode in the substantial house now occupied by Mr. Robinson Mitchell, then lately builded by one Sheriff Luckock. It bears date 1745-46, and is to-day unmarred and unmodernised, remaining much as it was when John Wordsworth became its tenant. We know little of this young John Wordsworth, but he must have been a man 'tender and deep in his excess of love,' for when, after twelve years of happy married life here in the old manor house beside the Derwent, his wife died from consumption, caught, as we are told, by being put into a damp bed in the 'best room' when on a visit to friends in London, he never seemed to recover his spirits, and he himself died six years after her, in the year 1783, on the 30th December, and lies buried at the east end of the All Saints' Church. He lost his way on the fells when

returning from some business engagement at Broughton-in-Furness, and was obliged to stay out all night; the chill from exposure brought on inflammation of the lungs, and his strength, sapped by deep domestic sorrow, could not bear up against it. The orphans whom he left, Richard, William, Dorothy, John, and Christopher, four of whom were remarkable in after life, were then removed to the care of their uncle Cookson at Penrith, and Cockermouth knew them no more. We have been allowed, from William Wordsworth's autobiographical notes and his poems, to glean something of those early days. The poet tells us:

Early died

My honoured mother, she who was the heart
And hinge of all our learnings and our loves,
Nor would I praise her, but in perfect love!

We can in fancy see her in earnest converse with Mr. Ellbanks, the teacher of the school by the churchyard, talking about William's 'moody and stiff temper'; we can hear her say 'that the only one of the children about whom she has fears is William; and he will be remarkable for good or evil.' We may note her pinning on the child's breast the Easter nosegay, for the young lad is to go

up to the church, to say his catechism. Daffodils I expect the flowers were: years after, in the ecclesiastical sonnets Wordsworth, speaking of this act of his mother's, writes :

Sweet flowers at whose inaudible command
Her countenance phantom-like doth reappear.

Or we can see the father, book in hand, hearing the lad recite the long passages of Shakespeare, and Milton, and Spenser which were insensibly to mould his ear to music, fire his imagination, and make a poet of him.

But when I think of Wordsworth in those childish days I do not go off to the ancient school by the church to hear him stumble through Latin verbs. He was not as happy there as he was at Mrs. Birkett's, the dame's school at Penrith; there was no Mary Hutchinson to keep him company; and he learned, he tells us, when he went to Hawkshead at the age of ten, more Latin in a fortnight than he had learned the two previous years at Cockermouth. No, rather when I want to see the little William Wordsworth at his happiest, I go with him into the old Manor House Terrace garden

by the Derwent's side, and see him with his sister, that sister 'Emmeline,' as he called her, chasing the butterfly, or hand in hand peering through the rose and privet hedge at the sparrow's nest, 'wishing yet fearing to be near it.'

Or, follow him with his nurse, he a child of only five years of age, bathing and basking alternate, all the hot August day in the shallows of the mill pool, and leaping naked as an Indian through the tall garden ragwort on the sands, and clapping his hands to see the rainbow spring from middle air. Or I go with him by the river, 'winding among its grassy holmes,' whose voice flowed along his earliest dreams—that Derwent he could never forget—away to the Castle-hold of the barons of old time, Waldeof, Umfraville, Multon, Lucies, and Nevilles, and watch him peering with look of awe into the dark cellar and dungeons, watch him chase the butterfly through the grim courts or climb after the tufts of golden wallflower upon its broken battlements.

But happiest of all was he when with his story book he lay full stretched, as he describes in the *Prelude*, upon the sun-warmed stones and sandy banks 'beside the

bright blue river,' and there feasted his little heart on fairy tale and filled his soul with scenes from wonderland.

Wordsworth was never unmindful of the home of his birth. He left Cockermouth for schooldays at Hawkshead when he was a boy of nine, and though in the holidays, for the next five years, he paid an occasional visit to the place, his chief vacation associations were with Penrith. The Poet's connection with this town ceased at his father's death in 1784, when he was a lad of fourteen; but he never forgot it. From nature and her overflowing soul here in his childhood days he had received so much that all his thoughts were steeped in a feeling of grateful remembrance of it. He visited the home of his childhood occasionally to refresh his heart with a cup of remembrance, and we find a note of a certain visit in Dorothy's letter to Mrs. Marshall. Writing in September, 1807, she says:—'W. and M. have just returned. They were at Cockermouth, our native place you know, and the Terrace Walk—that you have heard me speak of many a time—with the privet hedge, is still full of roses as it was thirty years ago. Yes, I remember it for more than thirty years.'

In 1836 he interests himself in a scheme for building a new church. He writes to his friend Poole, of Nether Stowey, for assistance to this object. He tells him that Cockermouth is in a state of much spiritual destitution, nearly 6000 souls and only 300 sittings for the poor. Wordsworth cared for the poor. 'I have been the means,' he says, 'of setting on foot the project of erecting a new church there, and the inhabitants look to me for much more assistance than I can possibly afford them, through any influence that I possess.'

As a Keswick parson, I gather with pride further on in that letter, that it was the fact of the new church of St. John's having been built there that spurred him on; and that he hopes Cockermouth will do as Keswick has done, and thus excite other towns to follow so good an example.

It is interesting to note that the Cockermouthians of that day were not of one mind in the matter, or the Poet had been misled as to native church feeling; for the inhabitants having a windfall of £2000 given them by the Lord of Egremont that year, to spend as they pleased, preferred a new market place to a new church, and the old Poet

writes :—‘ This was wanted, so we cannot complain.’

But Wordsworth was disappointed and grieved too at the spirit of unkindness shown by some of the people of his native town to his good Lord Lonsdale. I have had access to a MS. letter of Wordsworth’s, which shows that the Church-building project fell through, as far as he was concerned, by reason of what he considered the unfair treatment of an offer of help, made by the then Lord Lonsdale to the town, in connection with the church accommodation needed.

So far as I know this was the last public work he attempted to do for the place that gave him birth. But at least we cannot regret that his last effort was in a cause near to his heart, the cause of the religious interests and life of his fellow Cumbrians, the cause of reverence, worship, and godly fear, of ‘ pure religion breathing household laws,’ the cause of the worship and praise of Almighty God, here in his native place.

The seed he sowed, though it lay dormant, did not fall on barren ground; and in a real sense the present All Saints’ Parish Church may stand as a monument to the immortal Poet, who then, as ever,

championed 'in perilous times the cause of the poor and simple,' and did what he might in his day for church life and piety in the place of his nativity, Cockermouth.

MOUNTAIN SILENCE AND VALLEY SONG.

Once more the Heavenly power makes all things new.

THIS was the line from Tennyson's poem that kept ringing in my ears, as on the mid-most day of April I wandered out and away across the vale to the skirts of Skiddaw.

Opens a door in Heaven ;
From skies of glass
A Jacob's ladder falls
On greening grass,
And o'er the mountain walls
Young angels pass.

Before them fleets the shower
And burst the buds,
And shine the level lands,
And flash the floods,
The stars are from their hands
Flung thro' the woods.

No, no ! this last couplet was untrue ; the anemones had not yet opened their delicate

shells, and the blackthorn buds were only dimmest seed-pearls of yellowish lustre. But as I gazed from the fence halfway up Latrigg and watched the Greta flashing, and the great plain fresh-enamelled with the first faint green of spring, a Jacob's ladder was let down from above Scafell and Glaramara, and all the angels that ever came on earth to fill men's hearts with April jollity came trooping downwards. They took on various forms. Some of them became tortoise-shell butterflies that lay in sunny content upon the moist woodland path. Others sailed out of blue air and became glorious peacock butterflies upon whose underwings in blue and black one clearly saw the head and face of human kind sketched in with lustrous powdery pencillings. Other angels ministered to the pink coral glumes of the sycamore; others, again, daintily untwisted the leafage of the wild rose in the hedge; others delighted to unfold the tufts upon the elder. But the angels that seemed to be busiest were those that made the vivid emerald of the 'dog's mercury' contrast with the faded red of the bracken in the woods, and where the purple birches showed against the flowering larches

added moment by moment a deeper, ruddier purple to the trees' beauty and a finer flash of green to the surrounding wood to set the purple off.

But all the gifts of the angels of that April morning seemed as nothing when compared with the joy of the sight of one single angel of the spring—he a lustrous-backed swallow who flashed from steel-purple into black and from black to steel-purple, and disappeared from sight behind the larches. I had known of his coming, for a swift-eyed shepherd had seen one of his kind in the valley as early as April 1, but April 13 to the 15th was marked in my calendar as swallowtide, and I had not expected sight of him till this week. Here he was, glossy with African sun, and full of silent message that summer was sure. The chiffchaff would be a-trill and the cuckoo would be calling for a mate within the week. Ah, swallow! swallow! flying north! How much of hope and happiness you bring. Then as I moved through the larchen grove, I heard the titmice whispering that they too were glad, they too felt reassured by sight of the swallow, and one walked on in a kind of consciousness that man and

swallow and budding larches were more akin than one had believed, until the joyousness of spring found the selfsame echo in such divers hearts, and that indeed the over-soul was one, the music and the melody one voice. Yes, Wordsworth sang truly when he wrote :

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach us more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

I met a child halfway up Latrigg braiding her hat with larch flower. Truly no rubies ever seemed so rich and rare as these which the simple village child had twisted in her hat; her sister had a handful of primroses she was taking to her father in the neighbouring cottage, for he was but slowly recovering from pneumonia, and the child knew by instinct that a breath from a primrose posy would do more for him than all the 'doctors' bottles' in the world.

'You have been up Skiddaw betimes,' I said.

'Ay, ay, sir; you see they've gone to "laate" Herdwicks to-day for lambing-time, and I went up to the Gale with the dogs.'

Herdwicks! Lambing! What did it all

mean? Only that those great brown slopes of Skiddaw which till this day have been vocal with flocks and alive with sheep, will by this eventide be as silent as the grave. For between April 10 and April 20 the shepherds know that the Herdwicks will become mothers of their springtide young, and so they will go forth to the fells and upland pastures, to bring their woolly charges down from the mountain heights to the safety and the food and care of the dale-farm enclosures. I overtook the shepherds at the 'Gale,' and went with them. Soon the dogs were seen scouring the fell-side, now disappearing from sight, now coming back to get a signal from their master. A wave of the hand to left or right was all that was needed, and away they went, and slowly and surely they seemed to be able to search out and bring into a close company the Herdwicks from all the heathery waste and grey-bleached mountain hollows.

Then began the home-bringing. Very tenderly and gently did the dogs urge the sheep, heavy with young, down the fell-side slopes. Now and again the shepherd cried, 'Hey, Jack!' and away the collies flew back towards him. 'Ga away by!'

and away again the collies flew in a great circle out beyond and behind the sheep. The sheep were a little hustled and came on too fast. Then the shepherd whistled and held up his hand, and the dogs sat like stones till he whistled and waved his hand again. So down from Lonscale and across the gully Whitbeck the sheep came. The dogs dashed off to where, through a great carpet of ever-lucent moss, the main fountains break from the hill. They slaked their thirst, then came back slowly to urge the flocks homeward and downward toward the Shepherd's Cross, and so over the Gale to the Lonscale Farm. We stopped at the Cross, and a tall, 'leish,' handsome man, with fair hair and the grey Viking eye, said in solemn undertone, 'Fadder and brudder cud hev been weal content to be wid us on sic a day as this, I'se thinking.' And the mist gathered in his eyes, and he said no more, but just went homeward with the sheep. Ah, yes, that Shepherd's Cross tells of men—father and son—who spent their whole lives in following the Herdwicks on the sides of Skiddaw and Lonscale Fell; wrought for their sheep, thought of them by day

and dreamed of them by night, and were as proud, as ever David was, of what they looked upon as the finest life a man need care to live, the mountain shepherd's round of love and toil.

I waved adieu, and up beyond the huts to 'Jenkin' I went. The red fern had been washed into faintest ochre, the heather had grown grey with winter storm, but everywhere beneath the blanched grass one felt new life and tenderest first flush of April green was astir; and as one looked down from 'Jenkin' into the circle of the deep blue hills and the Derwent's perfect mirror, one saw that though the larches were still brown there was an undertone of something, neither brown nor green, that flooded not only the larch woods but the great Latrigg pastures also, and betokened that the spring was even at their doors, and that the fells would soon rejoice with the emerald valley below. Gazing at the vale of Crosthwaite, where still all the trees seem winter white, one was astonished at the darkness of the hedgerows that divided the meadows, and one saw the new fallows shine and swim like purple enamel upon the green flood of the springtide grass. 'Jenkin' was reached,

but not until many swathes of lingering snow, black with the smoke of the blast furnaces of the coast and of Lancashire and Yorkshire mills, had been passed. Here at 'Jenkin top' we found two men hard at work 'graaving' peats for the Coronation bonfires on June 26.

'Well, how goes the peat-graving?' said I, and a ruddy-faced Norseman from a Threlkeld farm said, 'Aw, gaily weel, sir; but I'm thinking we mud hev nae mair kings upo' the throane, for this job will finish t' peat moss, and peats are hard to finnd within reach o' Skiddaw top. You see,' said he, 'it's lost its wire, and peat widout wire in it is nae use for makking a "low" wid.'

I saw that what he called 'wire' were the rootlets of the ancient undergrowth of years gone by, the matted texture of primeval springtides, and, stooping down, he broke a peat across and showed me the wire. 'You kna,' he continued, 'we shall just leave peats ligging here, and thoo mun send up scheul-lads to spreed them in a forthnet's time. Then they mud coom oop a week laater and shift 'em and turn them, and then a week laater they mud coom and foot 'em.

That is if thoo want 'em in fettle by Coronation-daay, for they are ter'ble watter-sick noo.'

'Foot them?' I said. 'What do you mean?' And the shepherd took a couple and leaned them one against another, and showed me how thus a draught of air passed between the peats and ensured their drying. 'Well, good-daay, good-daay. But we mud hev nae mair kings to be crooned,' said he; 'for peat moss ull nobbut howd oot for this un, I'm thinking.'

I bade farewell, and down to the valley I went, noting how doubly near and blue the hills and vales all seemed to grow, as one passed down beneath the veils of haze which had lent both greyness and distance to the view. Again I saw the swallow skim; again I watched the gorgeous butterflies, and, with a wand of palm-flower that had just lost its gold, and the rosy plumelets of the larch in my hand, I made the best of my way homeward, through air that throbbed and thrilled with the voice of thrush and blackbird, and felt the deep contrast between these silent flockless slopes of Skiddaw, and the ringing singing valley at his feet.

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